

HOME NEWS

Maintenance of petrol supplies may rest on decision today by Shell drivers' shop stewards

By Paul Routledge
Labour Editor

Hopes of ending the threat of a disruption in supplies to petrol stations of the "big four" oil companies, Shell, BP, Texaco and Esso, rest on a meeting today of tanker drivers' shop stewards.

Men representing 2,000 Shell drivers will decide whether to throw in their lot with the militant line of industrial action from Wednesday by men employed by the other three main suppliers, or whether to follow the lead of Mobil tanker men, who have accepted a deal expected to conform with the Government's pay guidelines.

If the Shell delegates opt to join the majority of drivers who threaten a ban on overtime and rest-day working, a work to rule from Wednesday, they will hasten the petrol shortage.

So far the Government is viewing the matter calmly. It would take some time for limited industrial action to bite deeply into petrol supplies, and there has been some stockpiling. But the Cabinet's civil contingencies unit has drawn up plans to cope with a full-scale strike should the dispute worsen rapidly.

The Department of Employment, which has discussed the matter with the Shell shop stewards and their union leader, Mr Jack Ashwell, of the Transport and General Workers' Union, is firmly refusing to allow the drivers to consider the next two years' pay supplements into basic rates. To do so would greatly boost wages through higher overtime pay.

With one eye on the lorry drivers, who have broken the pay code in many areas of Britain, the Government is seeking to prevent a big breach of the 10 per cent limit

on earnings while negotiations are coming to a head in many other sensitive areas of industry. "Pirate petrol": Motorists may be buying "pirate petrol" if the drivers ban overtime, Mr Geoffrey Atkinson, petrol executive of the Motor Agents' Association, said yesterday (the Press Association reports). "It will cost the motorists more but the garages will buy it," he said.

Petrol pirates would appear in the event of a fuel shortage because there was a surplus of petrol in Europe. "The pirates will hire delivery equipment and supplement the oil to their 140 basic rate and make a 10 per cent offer on a new basic rate of £50."

Welsh lorry drivers take action over pay

From Tim Jones
Cardiff

Industry throughout South Wales may be disrupted today after a weekend decision by lorry drivers to take industrial action in support of a pay claim.

More than 1,500 drivers, mainly belonging to the Transport and General Workers' Union, decided on action after members of the Road Haulage Association, who employ them, refused to concede their claim.

The drivers are asking the employers to consolidate the phase one and phase two supplements of £10.00 to their £40 basic rate and make a 10 per cent offer on a new basic rate of £50.

Aultguish, in the Highlands, from where 18 passengers were rescued yesterday by helicopter after their snowbound coach had been trapped.

Turmoil forecast in public sector industrial relations

By Our Labour Reporter

Ten years of turmoil for industrial relations in the public sector have been predicted by Mr Peter Jones, secretary of the Civil Service National Staff Association, which embraces nine unions with 500,000 members.

Writing in *Personnel Management* he said the Government should be removed as far as possible from public sector industrial relations and the maximum degree of free collective bargaining should be restored. Otherwise public sector employees would drift inexorably into second-class citizenship.

He called for an "honest broker" for public sector industrial relations. "If you are dealing with an employer as powerful and capricious as a government you need some third party involvement to redress the balance of power between the employer and the unions. But the third party has

to be independent and clearly seen to be independent." The loss of union confidence in third-party involvement in the 1950s was a tragic, inevitable consequence of successive governments leaning on arbitrators and other ostensibly independent agents, he said. But the time seemed ripe for another effort, or the consequence would be increased confrontation.

He gave a warning that synchronizing principle settlement dates in the public sector pay day "one great national pay day" had implications for confrontation.

Mr Jones, who said that public sector management was not noticeably of a high quality, suggested that a TUC public sector committee could ensure fair treatment in times of incomes policy. Its role would be much more important when there was no incomes policy in ensuring that the public sector got a reasonable share of the fruits of the economy.

State subsidized strikes 'a myth', research shows

By a Staff Reporter

The strikes in Britain are being underwritten by supplementary benefits to strikers and their families has little basis in fact, according to new research. The duration of official strikes, which seem to be getting longer on average, is probably related more to the level of activity in the economy as a whole rather than to the provision of social security benefits.

Those, and other unexpected findings, emerge from a study of strikes in Britain by John Gennard, lecturer in industrial relations at the London School of Economics. He concludes that, notwithstanding demands by some politicians, there would be little point in making fundamental changes in the provision of supplementary benefits.

Savings from cutting off strikers' families from supplementary benefits would be outweighed by the administrative costs, and such a change would sour government-union relations, he says.

Successful British governments, he says, have discriminated against strikers and their families through legislation on state benefits. Because the state does not stand aloof, collective bargaining processes and

strikes are clearly influenced by the web of social security benefits.

After contrasting what he calls the myth of state subsidized strikes with the actual take-up rate of supplementary benefits by eligible strikers, he found that 74 per cent, which never exceeded 30 per cent, Mr Gennard reports on two important case studies. Those showed that the most important sources of income to strikers' households were not state benefits but savings and pay owing from employers. Income tax rebates were another important factor.

The increasing duration of official strikes may be attributed, he says, to rising levels of unemployment. In periods of full employment the costs that strikes impose on employers are less than in times of rising unemployment and because the costs are reduced the employers' resistance is enhanced.

By tightening the rules in 1955, he says, the Government effectively ensured that when strikes lasted beyond a qualifying point even single strikers could present strong claims for benefits because the area of local discretion had been whittled away. *Financing Strikes* by John Gennard (Macmillan, £3.95).

Acas chief urges new right on recognition claims

By Our Labour Editor

A new right for unions to go to arbitration if recognition claims are rejected by an employer is proposed today by Mr James Mortimer, chairman of the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas).

Examining the state of labour law after the defeat of the Acas recommendation for union recognition at Grunwick, he fears that anti-union employers will now refuse to cooperate with the service to forestall unionization of their work force.

"This, it is surely fair to say, was not the intention of nearly all who supported the Employment Protection Act," he writes in *Personnel Management*. But the answer, he says, would not be to give Acas powers to compel cooperation.

He suggests scrapping the recognition procedure

down in sections 11 to 16 of the Act, while retaining the voluntary conciliation procedure for recognition claims. In place of the present legislative measures a new provision could be introduced drawing on the experience of the Industrial Disputes Order that operated for many years under successive Labour and Conservative governments.

"In an area of employment where there was no framework for collective bargaining, but where a union had been refused recognition, it could apply to Acas for the right to go to arbitration on a claim on behalf of its members."

He says that it would be necessary to ensure that claims were not referred to arbitration when provision for collective bargaining with independent unions already existed. "In other words, such a procedure would not provide a means of entry or disruption by break-away or raiding unions."

Regional press dispute talks fail

Members of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) employed on provincial newspapers in England and Wales are to start a nationwide programme of sanctions from today after the collapse of pay talks with the Newspaper Society on Saturday.

The sanctions include a ban on night work, withdrawal of the use of private cars, a ban on handling advertising features, and an insistence that material from non-journalists must be processed by bona fide journalists.

The NUJ said yesterday: "If they do not hit sufficiently we will review the situation and we may decide to apply extra pressure."

Civil Service urged to drop age limit

The Civil Service should drop its age limit for recruitment immediately, not wait until it is required to do so by law, the Equal Opportunities Commission says today.

An industrial tribunal ruled in November that the Civil Service Department's recruitment age limit of 28 discriminated against women because during their 20s many women were busy looking after children. It upheld a complaint by Mrs Belinda Price, aged 37, who had been refused a job in the executive grade because she was over age.

The judgment gave the department and the Civil Service unions until 1980 to sort out a different and non-discriminatory system of recruitment.

But Lady Howe, deputy chairman of the commission and chairman of its advertising working party, says today: "The Civil Service Department are dragging their feet."

"The pity is that the CSD, of all organizations, seem so ready to make a start on changing their rules now. We regret this very much. In the two years up to 1980, the CSD will no doubt continue to advertise for recruits; indeed, they have already done so since the Price case, using discriminatory age limits again in their advertisements."

Government not to abandon grants for jobs

By Our Political Reporter

Mr Broth, Secretary of State for Employment, will tell the Commons today that the Government has no intention of abandoning its employment subsidy schemes, even though the EEC is demanding high changes.

He will set out the Government's views in a debate on unemployment initiated by the Opposition. Ministers are to have further talks with EEC Commissioners on the temporary employment subsidy schemes, which lapse in March.

Nearly 190,000 workers are affected by the subsidy scheme, costing more than £150m a year. The EEC, which approved the introduction of the scheme, is now asking that the amount paid should be reduced, affecting some 60,000 jobs.

The debate will be the first big one this session on the Government's handling of the economy.

Average incomes rising more slowly each year

The estimated annual increase in average earnings, after tax of a married man with two dependent children under 11 in each year since 1970-71, with the percentage in parentheses, was as follows:

1971-72, 11.74 (2.4); 1972-73, 11.21 (2.4); 1973-74, 10.50 (2.4); 1974-75, 10.50 (2.4); 1975-76, 10.50 (2.4); 1976-77, 10.50 (2.4); 1977-78, 10.50 (2.4).

Treasury, Jan 24. National incomes: income per head of population (in US \$) in 1975 was: Switzerland 8,460; Sweden 8,670; United States 7,090; Denmark 7,010; Federal Republic of Germany 6,870; Canada 6,990; Norway 7,090; Belgium 6,350; France 6,370; Netherlands 5,950; Australia 6,200; New Zealand 4,270; Austria 5,000; Japan 4,400; United Kingdom 4,030.

MPs pay: The ratio of MPs' salaries to national average earnings in each October since 1971 has been: 1971, 1.8:1; 1972, 1.9:1; 1973, 1.9:1; 1974, 1.6:1; 1975, 1.6:1; 1976, 1.5:1; 1977, 1.5:1.

Lord President, Jan 19. Purchasing power: The number of minutes work needed for the average industrial worker to earn the price of a pint of milk and of a beer was: October, 1959, 8 and 23; 1960, 7 and 13; 1970, 6 and 14; 1975, 4 and 12; 1977, 5 and 13.

Employment, Jan 20. Savings: Real personal disposable

Answers in Parliament

A periodic digest of information given in parliamentary written replies with the source and dates on which they appeared in Hansard.

Incomes (measured in £1,000m at 1970 prices) and the proportion allotted to savings were: 1949, 19.3; 1950, 25.4; 1951, 41.5; 1952, 33.6; 1953, 31.1; 1954, 31.6.

Treasury, Jan 15. Inland Revenue staff: The number of Inland Revenue permanent staff, the number of direct tax payers and the number of revenue employees per 10,000 direct tax payers were: 1945-46, 48,843; 1955-56, 52,958; 1965-66, 52,168; 1975-76, 52,168; 1976-77, 52,168; 1977-78, 52,168.

Treasury, Jan 19. Rating: The yield of industrial and commercial rates in England and Wales was about £2,000m in 1977-78.

Environment, Jan 23. National Insurance: Total yield from all employers' national insurance contributions for 1977-78 is estimated at £5,800m. The estimated yield of the national insurance surcharge is £1,225m. Health and Social Security, Jan 23.

Violent clashes as IRA marks Bloody Sunday

From Christopher Walker
Belfast

Street violence flared in Northern Ireland yesterday as republican sympathizers commemorated the sixth anniversary of "Bloody Sunday" the afternoon in 1972 when 13 people were shot dead by British paratroops in Londonderry.

In Belfast two soldiers were wounded by snipers, and there was a spate of hijacking in the west of the city. Seven people, including three buses, were seized and set on fire. Police broadcast warnings advising motorists to avoid certain republican districts.

Rioting in Londonderry began after about a hundred youths broke away from a march of 4,000 supporters of Provisional Sinn Féin, the political wing of the Provisional IRA. They attacked troops and police with stones and bottles and set fire to a building near the city centre.

Earlier four members of the Provisional IRA had set up a road block in the Geesman estate, where they displayed their newest weapon, the American-made M16 belt-fed machine gun, for the first time. The gun, capable of firing up to 350 rounds a minute, was carried by one of four armed men in combat uniform manning the block.

Last week intelligence sources in Belfast said that the Provisional IRA had received at least six such guns in a

shipment that was believed to have arrived through the Irish Republic and the Middle East. They are regarded as the most powerful weapons in IRA hands.

Yesterday's rioting in Londonderry began as most of the marchers were attending a rally addressed by Provisional Sinn Féin speakers in the part of the Bogside, now known as "Free Derry Corner".

Earlier a smaller demonstration was organized by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association. One speaker described as an insult the decision to send back the First Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, the unit involved in the Bloody Sunday shootings, for a new tour of duty this year.

Londonderry: More than 700 demonstrators marched from Shepherds Bush to Hammer-smith Town Hall, London, yesterday to commemorate "Bloody Sunday" (a Staff Reporter writes).

After the demonstrators had been jeered at by about twenty members of the British Movement at Shepherds Bush, the march made its way to the base of The 5th Parachute Regiment (Territorial) in White City Road, where Mrs Bernadette McAliskey, former MP for Mid Ulster, spoke in support of the International Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland.

The tribunal will take evidence about British rule and review it before a jury from Labour organizations.

Freedom to be an optio Scots po

By Michael Hatfield
Political Reporter

The Prime Minister firmly rejects today a demand from Scottish Party leaders in Scotland that the Government should allow Scottish people to opt out of independence.

The Scottish leader, Mr James Douglas, said that the question of the Scottish National Party's separatist argument that the Scottish people should have the right to opt out of independence.

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FIGHT BACK AGAINST CANCER

It is good to remember that most people live their lives untouched by any form of cancer.

But as too many are aware, cancer is something that casts its shadow far beyond those it directly affects. That is why so many people think it right to help the urgent work of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund.



IMPERIAL CANCER RESEARCH FUND

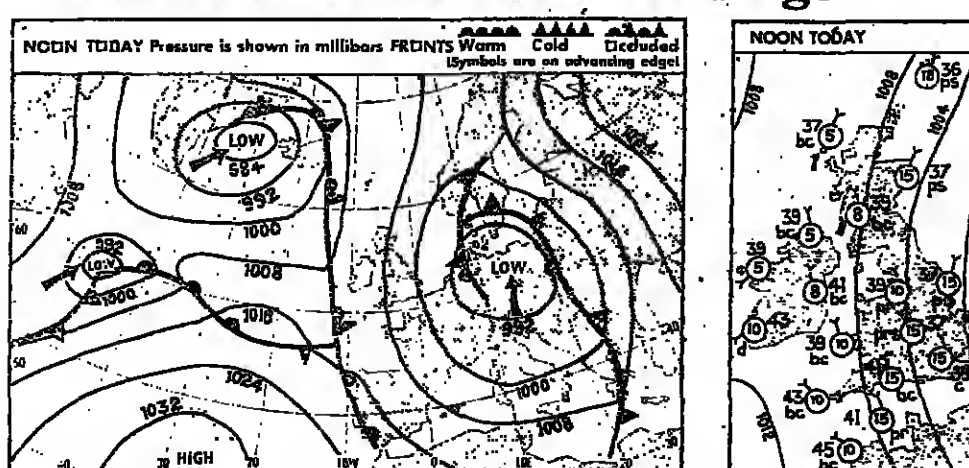
One of the ways you can help us NOW

I am sending the sum of £..... as a donation to the scientific work of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. I do not require a receipt (please delete appropriately). As you are sure to know, a donation made by means of a Covenant allows us to reclaim tax paid, thus increasing our resources at no additional cost to the donor. We have up-to-date details of how to make a Covenant arrangement - if you would like them sent, please put a tick in this box.

Mr/Ms/Ms: Address

The Appeals Secretary, Room 24/12, Imperial Cancer Research Fund, P.O. Box 123, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3PX.

Weather forecast and recordings



Today: Sun rises: 7.43 am; Sun sets: 4.46 pm; Moon rises: 11.57 am; Moon sets: 11.37 pm; Low water: 1.16 am; High water: 1.16 am; Light quarter: 5.16 pm to 7.11 am; High water: London Bridge: 5.8 am, 7.00 am (22.0 ft); 5.37 pm, 7.00 pm (22.0 ft); Avonmouth: 10.31 am, 12.10 am (10.6 ft); 10.48 pm, 11.80 pm (10.6 ft); Dover: 2.14 am, 6.50 am (21.3 ft); 2.41 pm, 6.10 pm (20.1 ft); Hull: 9.46 am, 6.50 pm (21.4 ft); 9.52 pm, 6.50 pm (22.4 ft); Liverpool: 2.24 am, 8.50 am (22.0 ft); 2.45 pm, 8.70 am (22.6 ft); A cold NW airstream covers most districts, with a weak ridge of high pressure across Ireland.

Forecast for 6 am to midnight: London, central S, central N, Midlands: Rain or sleet in places at first, sunny intervals developing after 10 am; heavy showers; wind NW, fresh; max temp 3-4°C (37-39°F).

SE, E, NE England, East Anglia: Rather cloudy, occasional rain or sleet, bright intervals developing after 10 am; heavy showers; wind NW, fresh or strong; max temp 3-4°C (37-39°F).

Wales: Sunny intervals, scattered showers; wind NW, fresh or strong; max temp 3-4°C (37-39°F).

Strait of Dover, English Channel: Wind NW, strong; sea very rough; max temp 3-4°C (37-39°F).

St George's Channel, Irish Sea: Wind NW or NW strong, decreasing to fresh; sea very rough, decreasing to slight.

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HOME NEWS

More pledge to review councils' powers upsets both reformers and supporters of the status quo

Christopher Warman
Government
spokesman

a campaign by the largest of councils in England and Wales for the return of powers lost through local government reorganisation, announced at the weekend when Mr. Secretary of State for the Environment, announced a further review of the

of dismay that greeted the Labour Party government conference at which the council leaders who had a more positive more

Charles Merrett, leader of the City Council, one of the council concerned, said he did not accept that any of the council's life, this must be ruled out, having clearly got a lot of things to do, and

move to return powers to the county councils to the authorities which until 1974 were responsible for the main services, including education and social services, began a conference a year ago. Mr. Secretary suggested "organic change" could be the system without

Mr. Callaghan, addressing the conference, agreed that the present system was a "bit of a mess" and that it was time to think twice when he asked the services of a local authority. He said that he needed the district or the county council. He promised that the government would produce proposals.

Mr. Callaghan did not think the time ripe to transfer powers; nor was it established how many local authorities should be included. "What we are talking about is not the powers of local authorities but of services to the people. What we must consider is how to deal with the grouping of the right

Mr. Shore offered a review by him and his Cabinet colleagues responsible for the main local government services in conjunction with the associations and other bodies to establish what the difficulties were. "We shall then give collective consideration to what emerges," he said. "Meanwhile I believe that we should, within the present framework, continue to work on regional and other conferences. It will help to establish the strength and need for organic change."

Responding to immediate criticism from delegates, Mr. Shore said: "With the best will in the world, if you imagine that you can carry out change in 12 months and get a Bill through Parliament without a majority you are living in cloud cuckoo land. If the discussions in the next year were properly carried out he might be able to say something very different in 12 months."

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services in the right places." The Government was not dragging its feet, he said. "We have got to get these changes right if they are to be lasting and we have got to get public opinion with us, because the public were disillusioned by the 1974 reorganisation."

If the news brought no joy to the councils seeking change, nor did it please the Association of County Councils. Mr. Gervus Walker, chairman of the association's policy committee, said: "We very much regret that neither the Prime Minister nor Mr. Shore gave a clear indication that there would be no further tampering with local government."

The fact that after all this time the Government had failed to identify the changes it thought necessary clearly showed that there was no genuine need for change, he said. "It now requires more time to find some political justification for throwing the whole of the local services into the doldrums."

Mr. Walker said the important matter was to give the public the best possible service. "Surely the lessons the Government should have learnt from its excursions into devolution would have taught it that the public are heartily sick of change and upheaval that bring them few benefits but extra costs and added confusion. For the good of everyone, let us have some stability."

The conference ended with a call from Miss Joan Lester, chairman of the national executive committee, for a fair share of growth for public spending.



Julian Lloyd Webber, solo cellist at the Ernest Read children's concert in London on Saturday, with some of the audience. He attended his first Ernest Read concert 20 years ago.

Parties vie on race in run-up to by-election

By Peter Evans

Home Affairs Correspondent

The Government intends to strengthen the Race Relations Act in the coming year, Mr. John, Minister of State at the Home Office, said yesterday.

Speaking about incitement to racial hatred, he said that the Government was looking at the Public Order Act. A successful prosecution under that Act could create a band of knowledge that would enable the police and other people "to see the ambit of the law," he said.

But he told the Labour Party's local government conference in Bristol that the Government would not legislate to "out of existence, or ban it out of existence. The only way it can be beaten is by the creation of the form of society we want and by the attitudes of the people. It is a long-term effort."

Amid many speeches expressing hope that race relations and immigration would be kept out of pre-election campaigning, despite signs that they would not, the attitudes of the two main parties became clearer during the weekend.

Both are seeking to gain the advantage in the run-up to the forthcoming by-election at Ilford, North, caused by the death of Mrs. Millie Miller, although that campaign has not officially started. The Conservatives regard it as a test of the long-term efforts they are

making to win the coloured vote in the general election. Seeking to overcome Labour's attempts to benefit from apparent disarray in the Conservative Party's ranks on immigration, Mr. Whitelaw, the Tory deputy leader and spokesman on home affairs, yesterday sought to reassure Asians that the party would not go back on its promises.

He said in a BBC television programme for Asians that Conservatives would "renew their commitments to 'goose with a right to enter Britain before introducing tighter immigration policies. But the promotion of good race relations had to be accompanied by the strictest possible control on future immigration," he said.

"We are ending a phase when we are honouring our commitments from the past to United Kingdom passport holders from East Africa. We are honouring our commitment to the dependants of those who were here on February 1, 1973."

Once that had been done, plans would have to be devised for the future. He did not think that the vast majority of British people would "feel that we could, with our problems, have immigration on a considerable scale from any part of the world, from any colour, or from any race."

The interview also showed that Mr. Whitelaw intends to assert his authority against any right-wing pressure. He said that he had asked Mr. Keith Speed, Conservative MP for Ashted, to prepare plans for

him. "I have the right first to reject these if I wish, say I do not think these are any good, and then of course to put forward to my colleagues those proposals which I think are sensible."

In Bristol on Saturday Mr. Callaghan, speaking at the local government conference, commented: "When I say that I hope the Leader of the Opposition will have no truck with some of the ideas going around, I do not say it because I want to make a party point. I believe it will be a bad day for Britain if this becomes a real matter of party controversy."

What I know is that this country will be a divided society that will not be true living in unless there is true racial equality for every citizen who lives in it."

Mr. Peter Walker, Conservative MP for Worcester, later challenged Mr. Callaghan to support his statements with action. "He is disastrous at performing any actions that genuinely help the coloured communities in Great Britain," he said.

Under the Callaghan Government, the unemployment of young blacks had quadrupled. The house improvement campaign that was doing much to improve the old houses in which they lived had been cut by two-thirds by Mr. Callaghan's ministers.

Mr. David Lane, chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, said on Saturday, in Southall, West London, that 1978 had started badly for race

relations. Feelings of fear and insecurity had been heightened among ethnic minorities.

"Their faith in the fairness of the legal system is damaged by some of the judge's remarks in the Kingsley Read case. They are dismayed by the continuing noise and activity of extremist groups, evident in the series of physical attacks on community relations offices and bookshops and in the latest attempt to infiltrate schools. They are disturbed by the renewed speculation over immigration."

He called for "greater sensitivity" on the part of the media.

Repatriation urged: Mr. Enoch Powell, Ulster Unionist MP for Down, South, said yesterday that repatriation of a really significant element of Britain's immigrants was the only way to avoid tragedy and catastrophe (the Press Association reports).

Speaking on the independent television programme, *Weekend World*, Mr. Powell said that the notion that Britain could have a large permanent Asian population and that there would be no more immigration was evidence of a failure to face reality.

He did not believe that an immigrant and "immigrant-descendant" population could be accommodated within Britain "without destruction, destructive effects."

He decided that Conservative Party policy on immigration was closer to his own than that of the Labour Party.

Louis Chase profile, page 5

Home Office calls for report into violence

From Arthur Osman

Wolverhampton

Mr. John, Minister of State at the Home Office, has asked for a report on the outbreak of violence by 200 black youths in Wolverhampton on Friday night, in which five policemen were injured and police vehicles were damaged.

In the aftermath of the violence, a leading West Indian resident said yesterday that the town was seeing the result of clandestine activities by extreme left and right-wing political groups.

Two white youths aged 18 are to appear before the town's magistrates today. They were arrested on Saturday night in the Finchfield district and charged with conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace.

Seven black people arrested on Friday night have been bailed to appear on March 15. On Saturday and last night more than a hundred members of West Midlands police special patrol groups stood by to reinforce local policemen if necessary, but all remained quiet.

Friday night's violence centred on the George public house. At closing time a group of white youths left carrying National Front slogans at black youths. The police tried to keep the two groups apart but were unable to prevent the outbreak of fighting.

Mr. Maurice Buck, West Midlands deputy chief constable, said yesterday: "There have been a number of suggestions as to why it started, including the activities of gangs wearing Ku-Klux-Klan hoods, but I do not think it is linked to that at all."

A police official said useful discussions had been held with leaders of the black community.

Appeal to union: Coloured kitchen staff and waiters picketing the Garner's Steak House restaurants to demand a union in a union recognition dispute are appealing for union help after being attacked by cars which, they say, sport racist slogans (the Press Association reports).

£25,000 plea by abortion group

The British Pregnancy Advisory Service is making an appeal to try to meet £25,000 costs it incurred in pursuing a libel action against the authors of the book *Babies for Burning*.

The authors withdrew their allegations against the service and apologized in the High Court.

g rise in highway vandalism

Chief Bailiff

Port Correspondent

of vandalism on British roads has more than doubled in the last 10 years. The figures reported to the police show from 16,000 to 33,000, and that is just the tip of the iceberg," British Rail

is of endangering life by objects on the line, as near Sunderland last when a computer track crashed by concrete blocks, car seat, have risen nearly 10 in a decade, from 600 to 2,300.

hardly less dangerous of throwing objects at trains, a present about 60 injuries a year staff and nearly 250 to cars, has nearly doubled. 800 cases a year to £500,000, such as London, Liverpool, Glasgow are the worst.

British Rail is fitting "plated windcreens to in those areas, and to need trains.

culprits are ever found in those who are it is a seven and 15. 65 a commuter train was hit by vandals; the driver a passenger, killed people injured. In 1974, it was killed by stones from a bridge. The culprit, 15, was ordered to be fined five years.

Office research suggests that publicity about it can increase it. Just of these kids in the British Rail says: "do not realize what the consequences might be; they are as an inanimate it is mindless violence, it is senseless, we cannot own."

most promising approach, even on schools and their interfering with way, can be dangerous offender.

ty cells as officers

st continues

ded cells are empty at night, one of the cells of Wight jail where cars have been going seven weeks. Their refusal to admit prisoners to "replacemen."

officers stationed in d are demanding three each year on the mainland for their cars. Prisoners at all number 400. The in the top security unit, and Albany, is more slowly, as the there are long-term

on officer, said yesterday there was no sign that the Office would grant a demand. "There is a discussed proposal nothing happens by 12, we ought to step action," he said.

i Homolka at 79

Homolka, the film died in a Sussex hotel an attack of a. He was 79.

Homolka, who was born in 1898, made films in England, France, and the U.S. He was recently in 1 in portraying Russian leaders, appearing in a Bond series.

st traps woman

st traps woman

st traps woman, aged 72, Hall Road, Brighton, was found in a room after a door after a woman at her home. She was rescued from shock, by police.

Pupils' written English standards falling

By Diana Geddes

Education Correspondent

Increasing concern at falling standards of written English among O level candidates is expressed in a report today by the chief examiners of one of Britain's largest GCE examining boards.

A comparison of last summer's results of the main O level English language paper, set by the Associated Examining Board, with those in 1976 indicates that fewer candidates are able to write fluently, interestingly and accurately, the examiners say.

"Some errors are reaching epidemic proportions," they include a tendency by pupils to join separate words, such as "thankyou", and "whilla".

The words "nice" and "good" which once peppered English language papers, seem to have gone out of fashion. The present overworked "fourth" and "great" as in journeys taking a "good eight hours" and getting off to a "great start".

The examiners are worried by an increasing tendency among candidates to write as they speak, without being able to distinguish between colloquial expressions as in dialogue, and those which require the use of more formal

English. Capital letters seem to be causing particular difficulties. "Some students resisted capitals even for proper names and the beginning of sentences."

The examiners are disappointed that "careless, casual English hampered some of their chosen topic gave evidence of ability. Poor standards of English lost candidates marks in other subjects too. The examiners for the O level French translation papers, for example, report that "the standard of English used was generally low, and quite a large proportion of candidates wrote a certain amount of gibberish, clearly having abandoned any attempt to write anything that made sense."

Standards in mathematics are commented on in another report. The working party set up by the Conservative Party to inquire into the relationship of education to industry has found a decline in the level of attainment in mathematics of pupils applying for engineering courses in higher education.

It says that many engineering departments devote much time in the first year of their courses to remedial work in mathematics and to teaching aspects of the subject that should have been taught by schools.

Industrial scholarships offered to students

Industrial scholarships of £500 a year will be awarded to between seventy and a hundred of the brightest applicants to undergraduate engineering courses this autumn under a joint government-industry scheme to be launched by Mr. Oakes, Minister of State at the Department of Education and Science.

The scholarships are designed to help to induce Britain's brightest and best to take up careers in industry. They will be awarded on a competitive basis and will be tenable for the duration of a student's course. They will not affect a student's entitlement to a local authority grant.

About thirty large concerns, with an interest in engineering, have agreed to participate in the scheme and have contributed between £1,000 and £4,000 to a central pool from which the scholarships will be paid. The Government will match whatever industry contributes.

An action committee of educationists and industrialists will select the best candidates. They will be free to go wherever they wish on completing their studies.

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Nurses help at crash

One person was killed and five were injured when two cars were in collision on the A30 near Stockbridge, Hampshire, yesterday. The injured were helped by American nurses from a passing coach.

Rabbits to be gassed

Thousands of rabbits and rats are to be gassed by South Holland Drainage Board this week because their tunnelling is endangering drains and waterways in south Lincolnshire.

Opel launches new Rekord on British market

By Peter Waymark

Motoring Correspondent

Opel, the West German car company, is expecting record sales in Britain this year, helped by the introduction of a new model called, appropriately, the Rekord. It will be available in right-hand-drive form from February 15.

Mr. Robert Johnson, manager of Opel's British marketing unit, said the company hoped to sell more than 22,000 cars this year. The best annual figure so far is the 16,248 sold last year.

The Rekord is a large two-litre model available either as a four-door sedan or as an estate version. The latter is a 2.1-litre diesel version for motorists wanting economy rather than performance. Prices range from £4,265 to £5,465.

Compared with the previous Rekord the main changes are a new body shell with wedge-shaped styling to reduce aerodynamic drag. There are said to be gains for performance, fuel consumption and stability in crosswinds. The car is roomier.

Prices up: Renault cars in Britain will cost an average of 3.9 per cent more from today. The increase is one of the smallest announced by a car company this year and is further evidence that the rate of rises is slowing.

The cheapest Renault model, the 4, is now £2,022; the most expensive, the 30TS, goes up to £6,125. Renault also announces a new basic version of its five-door car, the 14, at £2,695.

Lord Byers said that several industrialists had said that if the Bill was enacted they would be able to do business all over the world without fear of reprisals.

The Bill defines "a foreign boycott" as being "any policy adopted by, or action taken by, a foreign government, or the agency of a foreign country for the purpose of discriminating against any other nation or any other nation's citizens, or any religious, ethnic or political group in the course of trade or business."

Any individual or chief executive officer convicted under the Bill would be liable to a fine of up to £5,000 for the first offence, and up to £10,000 or imprisonment for up to two years for a subsequent offence. Any company committing an offence would be liable for a fine of up to £100,000 and in the case of a subsequent offence "every officer or agent of the company who knowingly and willingly authorises or permits the offence and is liable to imprisonment for a period up to 2 years."

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WEST EUROPE

Communist assertions of right to government place add twist in maze confronting Signor Andreotti

From Peter Nichols
Rome, Jan 29

Signor Giulio Andreotti, the Italian Prime Minister-elect, faces a second week of trying to form a new government amid indications that the left has created a new and potentially difficult situation. There can be no doubt after the Communist Party's central committee meeting, which ended yesterday, that the Communists are intent on laying claim to the recognition as a government party.

Italians jail earthquake town mayor

From Our Own Correspondent
Rome, Jan 29

Signor Gerolamo Bandiera, the former Mayor of Malatino, one of the towns heavily damaged by the Friuli earthquake, was sentenced yesterday to seven and a half years' imprisonment and a fine of 600,000 lire (£400) for having accepted money from a company supplying prefabricated houses to earthquake victims.

Signor Giuseppe Balvo, the other principal accused, who is private secretary to the government commissioner in Friuli responsible for the reconstruction programme, was given a seven-year sentence and a fine of 500,000 lire. Both were ordered to return the sum of 15m lire (£10,000) to the company which provided the prefabricated houses.

At the other geographical extreme of Italy in the valley of the Sicilian river, Belice, a certain satisfaction is reported for the first time since an earthquake struck the region 10 years ago. In the weekend when 13 warrants were issued for the arrest of persons accused of speculation in reconstruction programmes.

West German dockers call off strike

From Our Own Correspondent
Bonn, Jan 29

West Germany's first big dock strike, which has paralysed seven ports, including Hamburg and Bremen, was called off after the two sides agreed a settlement at the weekend. Work is due to begin again tomorrow morning.

Prisoners start blaze in Oviedo protest

Oviedo, Jan 29.—Prisoners in Oviedo provincial jail set fire to their mattresses today, starting a blaze that caused considerable damage. Two prisoners were slightly injured.

The 135 inmates returned to their cells after riot police were called in.

It was the latest revolt by Spain's political prisoners who want an amnesty for those granted to non-law prisoners during the past two years. Malaga jail was almost destroyed yesterday by prisoners who rioted through the night and there was prison unrest in the Canary Islands.—Reuter and UPI.

British observers to attend manoeuvres in Russia

By Henry Stanhope
Defence Correspondent

Britain is one of seven NATO powers who are sending official observers to a Soviet military exercise next month. This is the first time that Britain has been invited by the Russians under the terms of the final act of the Helsinki agreements in 1975.

The senior British observer will be Major-General E. A. Burgess, the Army's Director of Combat Development, who will be accompanied by Brigadier C. D. H. Wilson, senior military attaché at the British Embassy in Moscow.

The exercise, involving 25,000 troops, will take place between February 6 and 10. Code-named Berezhina, it will be held in the area around Minsk, Orsha and Polesk, about 500 miles south-west of Moscow.

Other NATO countries invited are the United States, West Germany, France, Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg. The Austrians, who are non-aligned, have also been asked.

potential partners in government.

In his desire to avoid a general election, Signor Berlinguer discussed the possibility of a government that would for the first time exclude the Christian Democrats.

However, this "hypothesis" as he put it, was rejected today by the Christian Democrats. Their official newspaper, *Il Popolo*, suggested that the Communists could form part of a majority supporting a government pledged to apply an emergency programme. But they could not enter government.

The idea of such a programme—seen in terms of a social pact—is gaining ground here after Signor Luciano Lama, the left-wing trade union leader, took the controversial step of aligning the unions with the concept of an austerity programme. It remains to be seen whether he will succeed in taking the whole union movement with him.

Attempt to improve inter-German links

From Our Correspondent
Berlin, Jan 29

High-level inter-German talks were held in East Berlin at the weekend in an attempt to halt the deterioration of relations between the two German states.

If nothing else, the ground was prepared for removing the obstacles in the way of better relations. This is the conclusion to be drawn from what Herr Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski, Minister of State in the West German cabinet, had to say on his discussions with Herr Hermann Axen, the foreign affairs spokesman in the East German party Politburo, Herr Oskar Fischer, the East German Foreign Minister, and Herr Herbert Haebler, a member of the party Central Committee.

Herr Wischnewski arrived in East Berlin on Friday night, as personal envoy of Herr Schmidt, the West German Chancellor. His interlocutors were representing Herr Erich Honecker, the East German leader.

No further meeting at this level has been arranged. Herr Wischnewski said that negotiations would continue on the usual diplomatic level.

Peyrefitte report resurrected as increase in crime and political outrages becomes election issue

From Ian Murray
Paris, Jan 29

The French Cabinet meeting on Wednesday is to be devoted to the growing problem of violence in the country. A report on the subject by M. Alain Peyrefitte, the Justice Minister, has been gathered since it was presented last July, but a series of recent events has turned the subject into an election issue. So the report is now to be considered and acted upon.

The most spectacular of these events has been the kidnapping of Baron Edouard de Selys-Longchamps, the millionaire Belgian industrialist, by an armed gang in the middle of Paris. This has turned the spotlight back once more on to the problem which prompted President Giscard d'Estaing to set up the inquiry under M. Peyrefitte in March 1976. The kidnapping, while spectacular, is no more than symptomatic of the growing trend to violent crime.

A better example is the case of an escaped convict—now wanted for three murders—whose kidnapping has been running parallel to the search for the Baron's kidnappers.

"Public enemy No. 1" by newspaper, is forming a small-time crook who typifies the person M. Peyrefitte reported was mainly responsible for the growth of violent crime in France during the 1970s.

Typically, such a person is in his late 20s and 30s, comes from a poor family, had his schooling disrupted, and is a heavy drinker. He is among those responsible for doubling the overall crime rate in France over the past 10 years. The number of more serious and violent crimes has been increasing even faster.

For example, criminal murders are increasing at the rate of 20 per cent a year, while over the past 15 years hold-ups have increased by 3,000 per cent and there are now an average of 16 a day in Paris alone.

The Peyrefitte report argues that there are social reasons for the increase, many of them familiar to British ears—tower block flats, rising school-leaving age, the influence of television and the media.

Perhaps one of the most disruptive elements has been the erosion of French rural life, which has down the centuries been the backbone of the country. Increasing numbers of people are leaving the land to live in the unfamiliar and unsettling urban surroundings.

In these matters, however, France is little different from other industrial nations. What is a special case, however, is its increasingly explosive way of protest. Not only do nationalists seek to make their point by blowing things up, but extremist groups of all complexions blame their way into the headlines with monotonous regularity and a few nuances of plot.

There have been two such waves of protest in France in recent years. One followed the demonstration at Crey-Malville last July against the building of a nuclear power station, in which a demonstrator was killed. Electricity authority officials took the demonstrators round the country where they were bombed and vandalized to such an extent that the employees staged a two-hour strike.

The second, came after the extreme left took over the Communist, the Baader-Meinhof group, to West Germany in November. Everything from

remains to be seen whether he will succeed in taking the whole union movement with him.

Signor Berlinguer, in summing-up the central committee's debate yesterday, called for an end to salaries that reached "scandalous heights".

He also insisted that workers should limit their demands in order to allow more opportunities for the poor and for the exploited. In this he was acknowledging that Signor Lama's change of union strategy had brought the trade union movement closer to the attitude of the Communist Party.

The last few days have seen confirmed a fundamental change in approach in the case of both and this will be a vital element in the consultations over a new government and in determining whether the country will in the end have to face an early general election.

Direct talks on baron's £5m ransom

From Our Own Correspondent
Paris, Jan 29

Negotiations for the release of Baron Edouard-Jean Empain, the kidnapped Belgian industrialist, on payment of an unprecise ransom of 50m francs (about £5.5m) are, it is believed, being conducted directly between Baron Empain's business associates and the kidnappers.

The Empain-Schneider group announced that M. René Engelen, its general director, was discharging all Baron Empain's responsibilities in his absence. The difficulty is not to collect the ransom, as Baron Empain's assets are estimated at between 150m francs and 200m francs and credit would be made immediately available, but the sheer physical problem of handing it over discreetly.

The French police, contrary to the assurances given a year ago by M. Michel Rocard, when he was Minister of the Interior, seem to be prepared this time to condone payment of a ransom.

The kidnappers would appear to be members of a new international gang. Since President Sadat's abrupt decision to recall his negotiating team from Israel 10 days ago, the Administration here has been working strenuously to persuade the two sides to resume their political and military negotiations. American officials today expressed satisfaction that the Israeli Cabinet has now agreed to send Mr Ezer Weizman, the Defence Minister, back to Cairo to resume the military negotiations.

During the forthcoming talks at Camp David Mr Carter is expected to pay a visit to Mr Sadat. Mr Sadat, for his part, will almost certainly ask Mr Carter to persuade the Israelis to be more flexible.

Sadat deadlock, page 12

West German tourist buses, to industrial subsidiaries were attacked.

There are, also, two extremely active nationalist movements in Brittany and Corsica, responsible for numerous attacks.

It is against this background of both wide-scale crime and destructive protest that another form of violent action is carried out—that of assassination and kidnapping.

Since 1972 there have been 10 assassinations or assassination attempts involving foreign diplomats or representatives in Paris, the most recent last July.

This grisly record must owe something at least to France's historical reputation as a haven for foreign revolutionaries and dissidents. It was because of this that Herr Croissant sought refuge in France, and one of the arguments of his defence was that to extradite him was contrary to the spirit of the French Revolution itself.

Because of the international political background to some violent crime in France, the crime for kidnapping Baron Empain was initially unclear. The police were quite relieved to find they only had violent criminals to deal with.

Wednesday's Cabinet meeting can be expected to implement some of the 104 recommendations in M. Peyrefitte's report. One of the most essential is to create an environment in which violence is unlikely to grow. Critics will argue that the Government is doing no more than make election propaganda.

The report said that the Royal Marines would test existing preparations by playing the part of Orange, the fictional enemy code-name used for forces of the Warsaw Pact. For three

months each year, the mountain and arctic warfare specialists of the 45 Commando Group, Royal Marines, Britain's front-line commitment to the northern flank of Nato, would like to station men and equipment permanently in northern Norway to enhance the effectiveness of their military contribution. At present they are restricted by a long-standing embargo of the Norwegian Government which limits the size of foreign forces on its territory.

At a press conference yesterday in Elvergaarden, the command headquarters near Narvik 350 miles inside the Arctic Circle, the commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel John Grey, said: "Carrying our snow vehicles back and forth to Scotland is not cost-effective. We would like to keep them here, and the people to service them, all year round."

Northern Norway is generally judged to be a weak section of Nato's 2,000-mile frontier with the Warsaw Pact. For three

Eight EEC nations near agreement over fishing

From Gretel Spitzer
Berlin, Jan 29

Ministers from eight of the nine EEC countries reached an almost complete agreement on fishing zones at an informal meeting in Berlin yesterday. The absentee was Mr John Silkin, British Minister of Agriculture.

Although Ireland will announce its final decision tomorrow, Herr Josef Ertl, the West German Minister of Agriculture, said agreement was 90 per cent certain.

Britain has been demanding exclusive fishing rights within 12 miles of its coast and control over the access of other states' vessels between 12 and 50 miles.

Renewing of Cairo talks releases US

From David Cross
Washington, Jan 29

President Carter will want to know Egyptian thinking on the next steps in the Middle East peace process when he meets President Sadat at his country retreat at Camp David in Maryland next weekend.

Announcing the Egyptian leader's acceptance of the American invitation, a brief White House statement yesterday said the purpose of the meeting would be "to hold an extensive review of the progress that has been made in the Arab-Israeli negotiations and of how they might proceed effectively toward the common objective of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East."

Officials have gone out of their way to stress that no dramatic developments are to be expected from the talks. Mr Carter does not want the present chance for peace to slip away and feels that this can best be achieved through some quiet tête-à-tête diplomacy, they say.

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OVERSEAS



Major-General Rafael Eitan has been appointed Israel's new Chief of Staff, replacing Brigadier-General Mordechai Gur. Born in Palestine 49 years ago, he fought in all of Israel's wars and was wounded twice.

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Tunisian opposition demands release of trade unionists

From Michael Coleman
Tunis, Jan 29

The Tunisian Government last night arrested Mr Habib Achour, secretary-general of the General Union of Tunisian Workers, at his home in the Tunis suburb of El Menzah. He had been under house arrest since the 1976 general strike in the course of which between 40 people (the official figure) and 140 (according to hospital sources) died in the streets.

Both before and since the strike the media, which are controlled by the ruling Socialist Destourian Party, have been accusing Mr Achour and his trade union colleagues of inciting hatred and violence. On Friday night Mr Dhaoui Hannabla, the Interior Minister, said Mr Achour would be interrogated only if it was shown that he actively encouraged the rioting. "Nobody is above the law," he said.

The arrest of Mr Achour was announced on the radio this afternoon as Tunisians were recuperating after last week's nightmare of violence. It was reported here that Mr George Meany, leader of the American AFL-CIO trade union federation and an old colleague of Mr Achour, was heading for Tunisia to try to mediate but this could not be confirmed.

A press conference was hurriedly called tonight at the seaside resort of Gammarth, near Tunis, by the Movement of Democratic Socialists, the unofficial though de facto opposition, which has several former ministers in its ranks. It stated that the troops should be sent back to their barracks, that all the jailed trade unionists should be freed, that radio and television propaganda should be crushed, that the state of emergency should be lifted and that a national commission of neutral, noted personalities

should be set up to put the country back on an even keel.

Among those present were Mr Ahmed Messiri, a former Minister of Defence, Interior, Justice and Finance, Mr Hashim Ben Ammar, a former Defence Minister, Mr Sadok Ben Jassar, a former Social Affairs Minister, and at present president of the World Federation of Engineers, Mrs Radia Hadet, former leader of the Union of Tunisian Women, and Mr Abdou Ben Slima, secretary-general of the Doctors' Union.

Mr Messiri said he regretted that their appeal to the Government in October and November for a national pact to try to heal the growing rift between the different segments of Tunisian society had been ignored. Before the news of Mr Achour's arrest, law and order seemed to have been restored. It was possible to get within view of the offices of the union but no nearer. Riot police had sealed off the streets.

The iron grip imposed on the country during the strike when, according to the Government, the demonstrators got out of hand and the Army had to be brought in, was certainly the appearance of bringing the country under control.

The decision to call in the troops was, it seems, made by the four strong men now heading the Government, Mr Hadi Abdullah Fahad, the Defence Minister, Mr Muhammad Sayah, secretary-general of the party, and Mr Hannabla, the Interior Minister.

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The sources said the Cuban military commander General Arnaldo Obledo, some of the Cuban fighting in Angola. On returning from Addis, he said Cuban officers were in the numbers of Ethiopian capital.

The influx of Cuban Russians has coincided with the arrival of Soviet equipment, including missiles and artillery, as well as the WSLF's recent claim for a counter-offensive. Ogaden is now well advanced, the reports say.

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The department said the aerial search for radioactive debris from Cosmos 954, which fell from orbit last Tuesday,

Tunisian opposition demands release of trade unionists

From Michael Coleman
Tunis, Jan 29

The Tunisian Government last night arrested Mr Habib Achour, secretary-general of the General Union of Tunisian Workers, at his home in the Tunis suburb of El Menzah. He had been under house arrest since the 1976 general strike in the course of which between 40 people (the official figure) and 140 (according to hospital sources) died in the streets.

Both before and since the strike the media, which are controlled by the ruling Socialist Destourian Party, have been accusing Mr Achour and his trade union colleagues of inciting hatred and violence. On Friday night Mr Dhaoui Hannabla, the Interior Minister, said Mr Achour would be interrogated only if it was shown that he actively encouraged the rioting. "Nobody is above the law," he said.

The arrest of Mr Achour was announced on the radio this afternoon as Tunisians were recuperating after last week's nightmare of violence. It was reported here that Mr George Meany, leader of the American AFL-CIO trade union federation and an old colleague of Mr Achour, was heading for Tunisia to try to mediate but this could not be confirmed.

A press conference was hurriedly called tonight at the seaside resort of Gammarth, near Tunis, by the Movement of Democratic Socialists, the unofficial though de facto opposition, which has several former ministers in its ranks. It stated that the troops should be sent back to their barracks, that all the jailed trade unionists should be freed, that radio and television propaganda should be crushed, that the state of emergency should be lifted and that a national commission of neutral, noted personalities

should be set up to put the country back on an even keel.

Among those present were Mr Ahmed Messiri, a former Minister of Defence, Interior, Justice and Finance, Mr Hashim Ben Ammar, a former Defence Minister, Mr Sadok Ben Jassar, a former Social Affairs Minister, and at present president of the World Federation of Engineers, Mrs Radia Hadet, former leader of the Union of Tunisian Women, and Mr Abdou Ben Slima, secretary-general of the Doctors' Union.

Mr Messiri said he regretted that their appeal to the Government in October and November for a national pact to try to heal the growing rift between the different segments of Tunisian society had been ignored. Before the news of Mr Achour's arrest, law and order seemed to have been restored. It was possible to get within view of the offices of the union but no nearer. Riot police had sealed off the streets.

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Salisbury pressure on bishop to rejoin fall

From Our Correspondent
Salisbury, Jan 29

Strong pressure is exerted in an attempt to get Bishop Abel Muzorewa to return to the conference when the Rhodesian talk internal settlement res Salisbury conference.

Muzorewa, leader of the African National walked out of Friday's after claiming he had been insulted by Mr David the Deputy Prime Minister.

According to reports Smith became angry at the bishop was backtracking on his promise to accept future majority rule would be elected on rolls.

The Prime Minister's is that the talks go on and there will be a change of attitude. But sources indicate that a firm pressure is being on Bishop Muzorewa in some kind of face-saving situation.

Without him the talks are as far as he is as the leader of the majority of politically Africans in the country or the other African the Rev Ndabandaba has dismissed the wall being somewhat trivial.

It is firmly believed that circles here that phone call from a British representative in Salisbury in a leading adviser bishop was the cause of a change of attitude.

It is believed that someone in White House pressure on the organization to speed up an agreement until the Malta talks. Dr David Owen, the Secretary of State, the 8 leaders, starting tomorrow, been concluded.

Britain as peacemaker. Letters.

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OVERSEAS

India suggests that Asian nations could link up in a regional economic community of equals

Richard Wigg
Jan 29

Mr. Vajpayee, the Minister of External Affairs, has proposed an Asian economic community of equals for "uninterrupted exchange of trade" extending from the Indo-Chinese subcontinent to the Indo-Pacific region.

Mr. Vajpayee told a group of senior civil servants and officials in New Delhi that the concept was not a new one. "What we envisage is a community of equals, not a hierarchy of nations," he said.

Mr. Vajpayee was well aware that this regional concept would take a long time to achieve. "But if we, with all its crises and national predilections, knit itself together in an economic community, there is no reason why this region of Asia, not be able to do so."

Vajpayee was careful to play a leading role in the grouping in which other regional powers, Iran, would be both economically and politically involved.

He is aware that the concept of a regional community is not new. It has already been proposed by the United Nations, the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development, and the Asian Development Bank.

But Mr. Vajpayee said that the concept of a regional community of equals was different. It was a concept of a community of equals, not a hierarchy of nations.

accept a role based on recognition of the concept of power," he said in an obvious reference to suggestions made by President Carter to the Janata Government during his visit to Delhi, and echoed repeatedly by Mr. Callaghan, the British Prime Minister.

The proposal comes just before Mr. Vajpayee's visit to the Shah of Iran. Suggestions inspired by Mr. Vajpayee, for increased economic cooperation with Pakistan appeared in *The Times of India* last week. The minister is due to begin a three-day official visit to Pakistan on Monday week. The Shah will also be visiting General Zia, the Pakistani leader, on his way home to Tehran.

Mr. Vajpayee proposed to Pakistan a package deal under which that country would be accorded transit through India for its trade with Bangladesh and Nepal, and India would have similar arrangements with Pakistan for its trade with Iran and Afghanistan.

Mr. Vajpayee went ahead with his Hyderabad speech despite a cool initial reaction from Islamabad.

Pakistan feels that its economy could not withstand competition from its industrially more powerful neighbour. It has already experienced difficulties in the Regional Cooperation for Development grouping with Iran and Turkey.

Mr. Vajpayee is evidently counting on the Shah to persuade Pakistan to be more forthcoming. Since the 1973 oil crisis India and especially, Pakistan have been helped by Iran and the Shah is in a position to demand something in return that would benefit India.

One of the principal arguments used by Delhi concerns the economic advantage to be obtained if the region's resources are exploited locally, instead of by outsiders from the developed world.

Mr. Vajpayee hopes that the theme of regional cooperation will improve the atmosphere of the visit to Pakistan. The Indians also think that the approach would bear some fruit. They intend to regard the 30-year-old Kashmir issue as closed.

Mr. Vajpayee's visit and one later this spring by General Zia to Delhi, offer the first opportunity of top level exchanges on the Kashmir issue since the Simla agreement was signed in July 1972 after the 1971 war.

General Zia told reporters earlier this month that the Kashmir problem must come up if relations with India were really to improve.

Mr. Vajpayee has, therefore, replied publicly that India's position in the talks will be that Jammu and Kashmir are an integral part of the Indian Union.

Prisoners of conscience



Singapore: Dr Lim Hock Siew

By Clifford Longley

Singapore joined the Federation of Malaysia in 1963, and withdrew two years later. Dr Lim Hock Siew was one of more than a hundred people arrested for opposing the terms on which Singapore was proposed to join the new country.

He was expected to have been released when his campaign was apparently vindicated. Instead he has remained in detention, held without trial on an executive order under the Internal Security Act.

Next Thursday will be the fifteenth anniversary of his arrest. The Singapore Government has justified his continued detention, and that of about 60 other detainees, on the grounds that they are members or sympathizers of the Communist Party of Malaya or one of its front organizations.

The basis for this contention cannot be tested in the courts, under the security law, but an advisory board has been set up to review detainees annually. Many detainees refuse to apply, as the board is not a judicial body.

In 1967, Dr Lim was one of a number of successful applicants for a passport, a licence to drive a car, and was momentarily free. He was immediately arrested under a new detention order, in which the legal loophole of the original order had been closed.

Dr Lim was offered his freedom in 1972, in return for making a statement of repentance and agreeing to abstain from all political activity. On the ground that he had not been convicted by any court, he refused to do so. As a result he is still held in Mount Cenis, a detention camp, under a special wing of Changi prison for political detainees.

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Hijacker subdued by passengers

Wilmington, North Carolina, Jan 29—An air hostess foiled an armed hijacker here last night by throwing a cocktail in his face, temporarily blinding him and allowing several passengers and crew members to subdue him. The hijacker had tried to divert a C-119 to Cuba, the Piedmont Airlines flight to Wilmington from Cincinnati.



dent Hillery of Ireland and his wife, who are on a visit to India, seeing yesterday at the Taj Mahal.

Teng assumes role of king's chief diplomat

David Booniva
Jan 29

present visits to Burma by Mr Teng Hsiao-ping, the Chinese Deputy Minister, are thought to be of great significance.

Mr Teng's role of chief diplomat is likely to focus on the aid which China has been giving to the Burmese Communist Party Army of 8,000 men, operating in the north of the country near the Chinese border. Until now Peking has succeeded in maintaining support for the insurgents while retaining reasonably cordial official ties with the government.

It seems, however, that President Ne Win is becoming increasingly restive about this. In Nepal, Mr Teng's talks with King Birendra—and his arrival there by direct flight across the Himalayas, instead of by way of India—will underscore China's desire to keep some influence in a part of the world where India increased its sway under Mrs Indira Gandhi, the former Prime Minister, by taking control of Sikkim.

Mechanization targets for Chinese agriculture

Peking, Jan 29—China's economic planners have set targets for the mechanization of agriculture over the next three years.

Mr Yu Chiu-ti, the Chairman of the State Planning Commission, revealed the objectives at a Peking conference on agricultural mechanization, the *People's Daily* reported today.

The plan provides for the mechanization of 75 per cent of the main agricultural operations, including livestock breeding, fishing and forestry, by 1980. Mr Yu conceded that this would not bring mechanization to a "high level" but would bring about a "marked change" in the conditions of production.

Only water that projects be undertaken to protect China from natural disasters and to increase the amount of tillable land.

The progress made by Chinese industry, especially iron and steel, oil and chemicals, by 1980 would then enable mechanization to forge ahead.

Mr Yu noted that agricultural productivity since 1949 had made it possible to feed

Foreign Minister Cambodia

Jan 29

adit Pachiriyangkun, a Foreign Minister, in Phnom Penh tomorrow for four days of talks with leaders on ending clashes and improving relations between the two

Port of illicit in skulls

a, Jan 29.—An illicit human skulls, reported about 10m rupees a year, was here today by a religious community.

ort by the Indian said several hundred am bodies at India's e were being sold nally for \$26 each, ort of skulls and was banned in 1976 rized again last July al purposes only— rance-Press.

Vietnamese refugee walked 350 miles across Cambodia to Thailand

From Neil Kelly
Bangkok, Jan 29

A Vietnamese refugee who walked from Vietnam to Thailand after his wife disappeared in a sea escape from Saigon has told the story of his 350-mile journey across Cambodia.

Because his three children and his parents are still in Saigon he can be identified only by the initials T. T. aged 34, is a friendly, round-faced man with broad shoulders that make him unusually sturdy for a Vietnamese. His three children, two girls and a boy, are aged 13, nine and seven. He is a civil engineer with high qualifications and in addition in Vietnamese he speaks English, French, Thai, Cambodian and Lao.

His wife was a pharmacist. They married when they were both 20. In the last hours of the Vietnam war in April, 1975, he escaped from Saigon by boat. Earlier she telephoned T. pleading with him to go with her.

He refused because, he said: "I thought my country needed me. There was so much to be done after the war." He has heard nothing of his wife since that day.

"All I know," he said, "is that she went on a big ship with hundreds of other passengers. None of them knew where they were going; just away from Vietnam."

T says that for him the war

was not too bad. He was exempt from military service because of his job and through family influence. Within a few months of the communist victory difficulties began at his work.

"I was given a new boss," he said. "A party man who knew nothing about engineering or even simple building. I was working on the design of a river bridge. My boss ordered me to locate the bridge at a certain point on the river which I knew was dangerously wrong."

"A bridge there would not have lasted five years because of river currents. I refused to sign the plans for the bridge and at once I was sent away to a reeducation camp near the Cambodian border."

"I was there three months. The camp was OK."

"When I was given a warning that I was to go to another camp in North Vietnam at Hanoi, I decided to escape. I had heard of the Hanoi camp. It was said nobody ever left it. When I escaped on February 7, 1976, I had no clear idea of what to do, but as I knew the border area well I headed for Cambodia."

For the next two months and one day I worked his way across Cambodia. Because of his fluency in Khmer and local knowledge he was taken everywhere for a Cambodian.

He walked east and north of

Times Profile

The black man's burdens

Louis Chase is one of those people who seem to be drawn naturally to the eye of the storm. Trouble at his destiny. He did not seek to be chairman of the Carnival and Arts Committee in Notting Hill, but was persuaded to become actively involved by the black community. The election to decide whether he will serve again is due to take place in February.

The place which exploded at carnival time last year was the most shattering experience of his life. He and others had worked day and night to make it an occasion of fun and happiness. Instead, he saw black youths attacking, wounding and robbing whites. The black stewards, who went to the rescue, their victims had to grab sticks to defend themselves, several suffered injuries and Mr Chase was punched.

As the police riot shields came out, it was for him a moment of truth, whose impact can be understood only in the context of his previous, sometimes bitter experience. That night he did not sleep, he wandered despairingly through the bruised streets of Notting Hill, knowing that for him and for race relations in Britain nothing could ever be the same.

He believes that the carnival will take place again this year. It has developed a momentum over the years that the authorities would find difficult to halt, even if they wished to do so. The place, the question is whether the tragedy of 1977 will be repeated. The answer will depend much on leadership by Mr Chase and others in the black community.

He accepts that more must be done to curb violence, not only by means of more stewards, but also by providing more events at the fringe of the carnival route where young blacks congregate, to alleviate their boredom.

It is natural that Mr Chase should be at the centre of the storm. Earlier than most, having come to Britain aged 17 in 1960, he has experienced ups and downs of a kind which have shaped his generation of young blacks. What is happening to them now will determine the course of race relations for the next half century.

The loss to those blacks not born in the United Kingdom is not only of homeland, but the home of the extended family, with the warmth, security and guidance of a parent. The lack of it in Britain is one reason why some young blacks go astray. "Glamor power" rather than "black power" in Mr Chase's childhood was the influence which shaped his life.

Mr Chase's grandmother on his father's side, was not working, so he was transferred, to live with her at the age of three months. In both family life and school, the authoritarian influence from Victorian times remained.

Louis attended chapel on Sunday mornings and evenings and Sunday school in the afternoon. His ideas of white people were that they were rich, courteous and tolerant. "The impression was created partly by the behaviour of the owners of the large house where his mother worked. Wealth and whiteness seemed to be synonymous."

That contrast with the poverty in which many good black people lived was enhanced by food, parcels and other gifts from his father and relatives who had travelled to work in richer, white countries abroad. There was a tradition of migration, though not yet to Britain. Louis's mother, who went abroad for the first time to work in a job arranged for her in a London hotel, sent him a watch, a television set and a car. He was a pampered, looking better fed than when she was in Barbados.

When his mother wrote to him suggesting the travel to join her in London and by return post sent him the money. It was August 1960, and he had never in his life travelled more than 28 miles from his home.

He had to adjust not only to a damp and misty climate and the urban pace of life—even crossing the road was a nightmare—but to his mother, whom he had not seen for years, and to a stepfather who was a week he was at the local public house and to hire a room in two rooms in West London. Louis sleeping in a small nest just big enough to hold a bed. They shared a cooker with a neighbour. The lavatory was for communal use and the house had no hot water. A week he was at the local public house and to hire a room in two rooms in West London. Louis sleeping in a small nest just big enough to hold a bed. They shared a cooker with a neighbour. The lavatory was for communal use and the house had no hot water. A week he was at the local public house and to hire a room in two rooms in West London. Louis sleeping in a small nest just big enough to hold a bed. They shared a cooker with a neighbour. The lavatory was for communal use and the house had no hot water. 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ENTERTAINMENTS

When telephoning use prefix 01 only outside London Metropolitan Area

OPERA AND BALLET

COLISEUM Credit cards 01-240 8238
Reservations 01-240 8238
ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA
Tonight, 8 p.m. *Die Walküre*.
Tomorrow, 7.30 p.m. *Die Walküre*.
Last performance of *Die Walküre* in the world. Tickets from 10p. No booking for last night.

COVENT GARDEN C.C. 210 1096
Tonight, 8 p.m. *Die Walküre*.
Tomorrow, 7.30 p.m. *Die Walküre*.
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ROYAL OPERA HOUSE 01-240 8238
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CONCERTS

NEW GALLERY 01-240 8238
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WIGMORE HALL 01-240 8238
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THEATRES

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MONDAY BOOK

The loved ones

Elsbeth Huxley

The Forest Dwellers
By Stella Brewer
(Collins, £5.75)

Fresh from boarding school in Wales, Stella Brewer went home to the Cambria to help her father, a Forest Officer, start a mini nature reserve. A baby chimpanzee was brought in covered with sores, barely alive after three weeks crammed into a small unventilated box on top of a jolting bus. "He was for sale: a murdered mother and three weeks of indescribable misery for the sake of a few shillings." With infinite patience, Stella Brewer nursed the little chimp back to life. Other captured orphans were offered. The first thing was to stop this ugly hypochondria of nature, arising from a thoughtless demand for souvenirs made from dead animals—bags, wallets, shoes, coats, belts and the like—which is causing such revolting cruelty and reducing to vanishing point several endangered species.

The sale of live chimps was stopped, but this did not halt their arrival at the nature reserve; the confiscated animals were handed over to the Forest Officer. What to do with them? Barring sale to zoos, ultimate release in the wilds was the only solution. But to find or catch it, education is essential. If no mother is on hand, the human surrogate must perform this service. So Stella Brewer, up to the situation, pioneered by Joy Adamson and her famous lioness, Elsa, where the human teaches the animal how to support itself in its natural habitat.

Stella Brewer's account of how she released her cherished chimps in hatches in a nature reserve in Senegal, and then taught them how to cope with their environment, makes an excellent reading. Anyone who fancies such a nice, interesting outdoor job should read her descriptions of chewing termites to show chimps how to do it, and repaying bits for bits by sinking teeth into the neck of a human. You must be top chimp to survive.

Polish Radio
Symphony Orchestra
Festival Hall

Joan Chissell

Under their founder-conductor, Grzegorz Fitelberg, the Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra worked hard to foster the cause of contemporary Polish music. For 44 years, perhaps the best of its kind at home. But on their visit to London on Friday all they brought was their national anthem. For the rest, it was all-too-familiar Glinka, Mendelssohn and Tchaikovsky. The wasted opportunity seemed all the more regrettable since their present conductor, Jerzy Maksymiuk, is a composer.

The Way of the World
Aldwych

Irving Wardle

While living human beings have for years been invading the plays of Farquhar and Vanbrugh, Congreve remains the last fortress of artificial comedy. Neither the National Theatre's *Way of the World* nor Prospect's recent Edwardian era revival has done much to help. The play is a masterpiece of wit and language, but it has been left to John Barton and the RSC to examine our greatest prose comedy for traces of sheer meaning.

The result is by far the best production I have seen, although I doubt whether it succeeds exactly as Mr Barton intended. The plot is famously incomprehensible. But, instead of skirting over it for the sake of the marvellous separate scenes, this production begins by challenging the spectator to understand the sense of it. Finally, it introduces Sir Wilford as a half brother to this Witwoud by a former wife, who was sister to my Lady Wishfort, my wife's mother.

John Woodvine speaks this straight out to the house, at most with a wink: he gets his laugh, and he also leaves you determined to try to sort things out. Thereafter the ramifications of the intrigue are all presented in a clear, unadorned, and the plot takes shape in a startling coherence. What it does not do is to develop into the kind of moral fable which seems intended from the icy treatment of the ending speech on marriage fraud. What we get is a superb treatment of the individual scenes, linked rather better than usual.

The most conspicuous novelty among the players is Michael Pennington's Mirabell. Gielgud has succeeded, and others have tried with less success, to pass off this character as Millamant's equally devious partner. Where Millamant lives through her lines, Mirabell lives mainly through the words of others: and Mr Pennington never competes with her. Instead he relates to her a cool acceptance of his own powers, and concentrates on the lover rather than the intriguer. He knows he will



Stella Brewer and friend

Photograph by Hugo van Lawick

Animal rehabilitators are like former colonial civil servants: they train their wards for independence and then withdraw. The difference is that colonial civil servants got golden handshakes and index-linked pensions. Not so rehabilitators. Into bush or forest vanish the loved ones, and she or he may never know whether or no they survive.

Some odd affinity seems to link chimpanzees with attractive young women. Why do the latter become so desiccated? Like humans, chimps have a long childhood and a total dependence on the mother which draws from her human

substitute as an upsurge of mother-love apparently more intense than most human habits can summon. If at times, this hyper-emotion seems to verge on the hysterical, there is no doubt of its authenticity. What with the Elsa hooks, Jane Goodall (who introduces this volume) on wild chimps in Tanzania, Daphne Seldrick on orphans in the Tsavo Park, Iain Douglas-Hamilton on elephants, and others, popular ethology is accumulating a considerable literature. Stella Brewer's contribution is a notable and touching addition.

Watching George Benson light up a capacity audience in the early hours of Saturday morning, one felt that he would probably agree with the concluding remark of his fellow American: "The blues is about a certain generation. I heard it from my mother and my grandmother to last me a lifetime." Benson, trained in blues and jazz and now operating in the lucrative arena which permits former jazz musicians to produce a variety of music, is known as a "street funk" performer as if his soul knew only sweetness and light.

Cast Off
Orange Tree

Ned Chaitlet

A vacant plot of land in a city centre is seen by different characters as an "international centre for misanthropes", a new factory to bring in employment and as a recreation area for adults, to be donated to the city by a philanthropic manufacturer of "plastic private parts". David Cregan's latest, *Orange Tree*, is a farcical comedy of manners, set in a city where the forces of capitalism are at it again, and where the forces of capitalism are at it again, and where the forces of capitalism are at it again.

Such an ambitious little play depends on a great deal of audience sympathy, and Mr Cregan uses humour, emphasis, caricature and disarming explanations to the audience to keep his themes bouncing along. I find it too bouncy and too facile, lamenting the many subjects with only the dig of mild aphorisms, and recurring image of fire to give it substance; I am probably demanding more than was

David Lyon and Beryl Reid Photograph by Donald Cooper

win in the end, and waits quietly at the centre of the wide dance of fools and fools until the delicious bird enters his net. The unerring wit of Mr Pennington's performance is its apparent sincerity: The marriage scene remains the jewel of the production, and the high point of the evening. It is a superb treatment of the individual scenes, linked rather better than usual.

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London debuts

Joan Chissell

The week's solitary pianist was Carlos Falciani, a young Brazilian now teaching in Cologne. There was evidence of a keen analytical mind behind his sturdy fingers, not least in Schumann's C major Fantasia, where none of the composer's sonnet parts or detailed blocks of expression were overdone. Now and again he grew over-resistant, with some forcing of tone. But Falciani's *Jeux*

Everyman
BBC1Credo
London Weekend

Michael Church

If a real man-made disaster befalls Britain, who will supervise those of us who are left? The army of course, the police and the firemen, and anyone, East Ender or Ulsterman, who carries a gun.

The gunless, I predict, will be led from within by such as Sid Kewie, ex-leader of the Digger Movement and now living in a tepee community in Wales. Social security money may figure in his calculations, and the violent break-up of society may not, but he and his friends are not picking over the nature's bio-rhythms, organized, respectable, ready.

Western society had already broken up in *Still Crazy After All These Years*, yesterday's *Everyman* documentary which looked at Sixties dropouts who had not dropped back in, went back in the previous week's *Everyman* interview with the manic Dr Tim Leary dancing immaculately along the street and saying that since Jimmy Carter's government is a battle for the new good society is being won. We met the ineffable Sir Mark Palmer. "Horse dealing is all very well but I don't want to go into the Church—in a way."

We met the gross and cheerful Poly Styrene and her band, and learnt that the punks were the hippies' revenge (from Caroline Coon, with

sardonic glee). The ecstatic rage of Arthur is now being still studied of Sufic texts in home. Mus Murray, ex-Garden, now carresses t in his real garden in an intense mantras of Allen Ginsberg, a ressembler, is still right the centre of things, awe-inspiring, looking out on the world, "I figure out what you doom instead of hope."

Last week's *Everyman* at a canny but not a collection of ex-dropouts were now publishers, a realization of experts. Dealers, voters, not taken together, the grannies managed, slightly shaming way may a hint about it farious ways in which love is oow rather be working its way through.

Everyman has often what some see to be under the "religious affairs" label: it is you look at, but the you look at it London are now muscling in act with Credo, but it quite not the case. Their first program racism, was mere but puffing, but their re the stresses and re Britain's Muslim co was of deep place. Yesterday's report, on who believes the CI dying on its feet, exam bright oaw window rather than the wares and it dclat nater n on the unctuous eyes Bowdler marching through Highgate C along pavements, into c homes and out of c Onward, Christian sold

George Benson
Drury Lane

Richard Williams

A black American musician, the leader of a band which sold several million records in 1977, told me last week that the blues are dead. Should be right, and there is much evidence currently supporting his theory: then the popular music of the west is in for a deep change, for the blues have been its backbone and its inspiration, albeit often unacknowledged, throughout this century.

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Orange Tree

Ned Chaitlet

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[illegible]

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The appointment is from April 1978, or as soon as possible thereafter until 30 September 1979.

For 1980. Salary scale £3,330 to £5,827 (under review). Starting salary according to age, qualifications and experience. Six copies of applications, naming three referees, should be sent by Friday 17 February to the Registrar, University of York, Heslington, York YO1 500, from whom further particulars may be obtained. Please quote reference number 1/6078.

**GOVERNMENT GRANT
FOR SCIENTIFIC
INVESTIGATIONS**

Applications for grants from the first allotment of the Government Grant for Scientific Investigations for the year 1978 should be made not later than 15 March 1978; an announcement of application to be obtained from the Executive Secretary of the Royal Society, 6 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5BS.

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Commercial Property

Industrial market still active

Activity in the industrial property market which became apparent towards the end of last year seems to be continuing into this, with numerous transactions taking place and several large premises coming on to the market.

One of the largest of these is an office and warehouse complex at Thornhill, Glasgow, which is being made available by Allied Suppliers, part of the Cavenham Group.

The complex, which is close to the Glasgow outer ring road about four miles from the centre of the city, has a site area of over nine acres, and a total floor space of about 240,000 sq. ft.

This is made up of 60,000 sq. ft. of offices, a single storey warehouse of 160,000 sq. ft. with a clear height of about 20ft and extensive loading facilities, together with ancillary accommodation.

The premises are being offered either on a sub-lease from Allied Suppliers at a rent in the region of £170,000 a year, or by assignment of the existing lease, Edward Erdman and Co. are acting for Allied Suppliers.

Another large property in the market is Charrington's former distribution and bottling premises in Brantwood Road, Tottenham, London, N17, which has become available as a result of their rationalization of distribution.

The property provides about 190,000 sq. ft. of space on a site of some six acres. Charringtons are offering the freehold with vacant possession at £350,000.

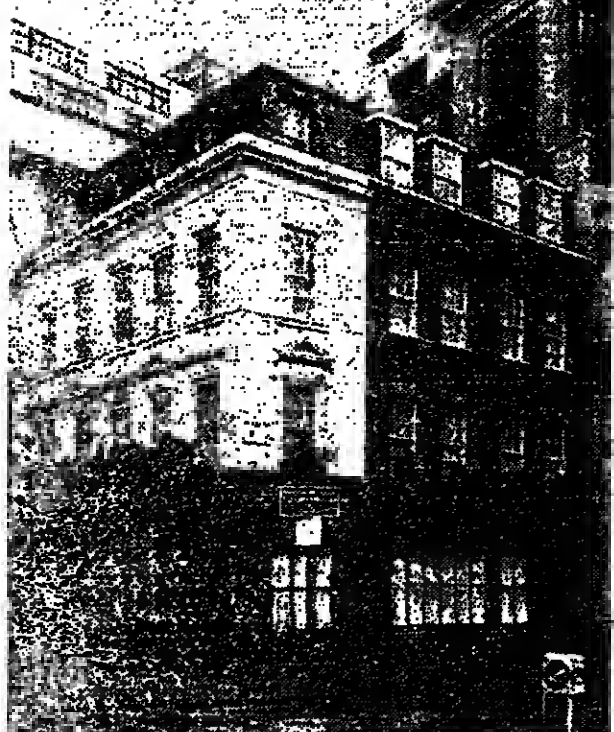
Edwards Bigwood and Bewley, the agents, point out that the sale is an opportunity for a company to acquire a large distribution depot to serve London, but that if it is sold to an industrial developer it would provide a further example of the current strong demand for redevelopment sites in west established industrial areas.

In Basildon, Powell Duffryn Commercial Services have acquired the long leasehold interest of a modern 50,000 sq. ft. factory on a site of three acres in Faraday Road on the Daneshill West industrial estate. The building was erected in 1967.

The property is held on a lease from Basildon Development with some 58 years unexpired at a ground rent of £2,500 a year, and was on offer at £575,000.

The purchase was through Chancellors and Co., of Reading, whose building and architectural department is to supervise an extensive programme of improvements and alterations to provide a computer centre for Powell Duffryn, due for completion towards the end of the year.

The property was acquired from clients of Edward Erdman and Co., and Taylor Woodrow Industrial Estates are offering freehold



43-45 Eastcheap, London, EC3 has changed hands for about £700,000.

Industrial building land on the Fitchville Industrial Estate at Irlam, near Manchester. Prices of £18,000 an acre are being asked for plots ranging in size from a quarter of an acre to seven acres, through Swimer Leon, of Manchester.

The land is adjacent to a 100,000 sq. ft. Tesco hypermarket. In total, some 10 acres of the 30-acre estate remain available, the remainder having been developed for Tesco and as industrial or warehouse units for several companies.

Buyers of freehold plots would be free to develop them as they wish or, alternatively, leasehold package developments could be arranged by Taylor Woodrow.

The industrial market is not quite so active across the Channel, according to Jones, Lang, Wootton, who note that in France it is generally sluggish.

Even so, they report what they claim to be one of the largest industrial deals in the Paris region for almost a year. This is the sale of a warehouse and office complex of 8,000 sq. metres for Sicom Pretail to Romme Delour, the transport group based on Boulogne.

Rent is in the region of 900,000 francs a year. The property is at Rue Johannes Kepler, on the Trappes trading estate near St Quentin en Yvelines, some 30 km from Paris.

The Trappes property was originally developed by the Lyon Group and sold as an investment to Pretail, an organization controlled by Compagnie des Petroles and Zurich Insurance.

In this country, the Aston Expressway Estates, some three quarters of a mile, from the centre of Birmingham, has been acquired as an investment by the Sun Life Assurance Co. of Canada for more than £700,000. The estate, which fronts mainly on to the Aston Expressway, comprises five units totalling some 42,000 sq. ft. and has a rent roll which exceeds £55,000 a year.

Bullock Developments completed the scheme last September and let each of the units within two months. D. E. and J. Levy acted for Sun Life Assurance of Canada in the acquisition of the investment.

Richard Saunders and Partners, the London agents, are moving to new offices at 27-32 Old Jewry, EC2, where they are taking 1,650 sq. ft. in the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney's building at about £10 a sq. ft. St Quintin Street and Stanley acted for the bank.

In addition, Richard Saunders have sold the freehold of their present building at 43-45 Eastcheap, EC3, to New Court Property Fund who acted in a joint acquisition with the new occupants, an overseas bank.

New Court is controlled by Rothschild's Property Unit Trust for Pension Funds and Charities. The price realized for the 3,100 sq. ft. building was in the region of £700,000. Vigers acted for the overseas bank and de Morgan and Co. for the fund.

In a transaction worth about £225,000, Commercial Union Properties have acquired the freehold of a shop and office property at 17 Princess Street and 59-61 Cross Street, Manchester.

It will be held on one of the C.U. Group's long-term funds. The vendors were J. Lyons Estates. It contains a total of 15,150 sq. ft. comprising shops and offices, and four upper floors of offices.

The adjoining property at 9-21 Princess Street has been held in the group's portfolio for many years, originally having been bought by the Northern Assurance Co. before its merger with Commercial Union in 1963.

Howell Brooks and Partners, of Leeds, acted for CUP and have been retained as managing agents. W. H. Robinson acted for the vendors.

In the funding through the Co-operative Insurance Society of the new Marlborough Industrial and warehouse estate in the Old Kent Road, London, reported last week, John Gamble acted with Peter Taylor and Co. for Flaxford Industrial.

Gerald Ely

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Why some people do not blame Israel for the Sadat deadlock

The day President Sadat recalled his Foreign Minister from Jerusalem, a BBC commentator delivered his verdict that the fault for the deadlock lay with the Israelis. The Egyptian President's concession had been met with Israeli inflexibility. His concession, it was explained, was to have moved from the extreme Arab position that Israel had no right to exist. In depressing contrast, Mr. Begin had offered no advance on the positions taken by Israel before Mr. Sadat's dramatic initiative last November.

This appraisal of the situation, in one form or another, seems to be widely held in this country and has been particularly evident in press comment.

Because I had just returned from a stay of four months in the United States, I was startled by the contrast this presented with opinion on this subject in Atlantic. Mr. Begin is there generally considered to have been surprisingly flexible and compromising and to have made concessions which could not have been anticipated.

During the many decades of the Arab-Israeli conflict, attitudes have become fixed. Both the pro-Israelis and the pro-Arabs back their sides, and from the all too abundant facts, select those which favour their cause. Slogans and conventional wisdom so very quickly take over that it becomes important, while the facts are still fresh, to deduce from them—rather than from the interpretations placed on them—what the position is, and which has been prevailing.

In his address in Jerusalem on the special session of Israel's Parliament which was the climax of Mr. Sadat's historic visit, he formulated his two main demands in these words: "The translation is from the text issued by the Egyptian Presidential office: 'There are Arab territories which Israel has occupied by armed force. We insist on complete withdrawal from these territories, including Arab Jerusalem, and secondly called for achievement of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to establish their own state'."

This formulation of the two most sensitive and vital issues in the dispute had long been the extreme Arab position. President Sadat in fact took the same hard line, and in almost the same words, in his speech on November 8 when he made his spectacular offer to go to Jerusalem.

On the following day Mr. Begin issued a statement which declared that "Israel categorically and absolutely rejects the conditions named by President Sadat: total withdrawal to the June 1967 lines and the establishment of a so-called Palestinian state."

If language means anything at all, Mr. Sadat's public statement before his momentous journey that if he rigidly adhered to the hard line there was no prospect of an agreement. There would have to be some movement, both from his maximalist position and from Israel's absolute rejection of them. In his own words to the Knesset, to "build a durable peace based on justice."

After Jerusalem, the two leaders met in Israel on December 25 and 26. Two ministerial committees, one political and the other military, began their meetings in Jerusalem and Cairo respectively. Both are in limbo since January 18 when Mr. Sadat's Foreign Minister by surprise by recalling the political delegation from Jerusalem.

In his speech to the People's Council on January 21 explaining the recall, and in subsequent statements, President Sadat made it clear that his conditions for a return to the talks were total withdrawal from territories occupied in the 1967 war and self-determination for the Palestinians which would mean, as Foreign Minister Kamel put it at the time, "a house for the Palestinians" equal to the "house for Israel". On these two fundamental issues, concerning the language of the opening demands with the latest expressions of the Egyptian position, it is difficult to detect any movement or compromise on their part.

On behalf of Israel, Mr. Begin presented a peace plan to President Sadat at Ismailia

on Christmas Day. It has been published and is more detailed and comprehensive than any plan hitherto offered by the Israelis. In its two major areas, it goes far beyond any previous Israeli government's proposals. The first is the willingness of Israel to restore Egyptian sovereignty over the whole of Sinai within its international boundaries. All previous Israeli proposals on the return of conquered territory in Sinai had included the retention of some land for security needs. In the Ismailia plan, Israel made proposals as to the timetable for withdrawal and the protection of what they see as their security interests including the controversial settlements. But all were proposed on the footing that they were not final positions but a basis for discussion of the negotiations which were to follow.

Secondly, and again going further than any previous proposals by Israel, a 26-point detailed plan was presented for the abolition of Israeli military government of the West Bank and Gaza and for its replacement by home rule. For the five year transition period which the proposals covered, self-rule was to exclude foreign affairs and defence which would continue to be controlled by Israel. After five years the whole scheme would be open for review.

Before putting these proposals to Mr. Sadat, the Israeli Prime Minister had shown them to President Carter and his Secretary of State, Mr. Cyrus Vance, as well as to Mr. Celislaigh, Mr. Carter's publicist. It was clear that Mr. Begin had taken "a long step forward" in offering self-rule to the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza. In an official communique, Mr. Vance described the plan as a "notable contribution" and commended its "constructive approach".

It is frequently pointed out that Mr. Sadat's public statements have to be seen within the context of his delicate relations with the Palestinians and the "rejection front". Mr. Begin too has his internal problems; in some respects easier, in others more difficult than his Egyptian counterpart since Israel is a parliamentary democracy. He faces strong criticism from the Labour opposition which is saying that he has offered too much too soon. Nor is his own party, which contains the traditional hardliners, untried behind him.

On the basis of a comparison between the present stance of both sides and their positions two months ago, it cannot be said that Mr. Begin has not responded to President Sadat's bold initiative, nor that there has been movement from both sides. Mr. Begin may have to move further and offer more concessions before agreement is reached, but he has moved.

President Sadat, on the other hand, appears to be taking the position that he has made his contribution with his brave and dramatic gesture which he should not be expected to give more. While Mr. Begin has made his peace proposals and claims that the next move should come from Egypt, President Sadat replies that Mr. Begin should produce something more than the two principal issues of withdrawal and a Palestinian state. Mr. Sadat has publicly not moved one iota.

Mr. Sadat deserves the admiration that has come to him throughout the world for his brave and dramatic gesture which offered, for the first time, hope of a real peace in the area. He was taken to the hearts of the Israeli people and, as millions of television viewers saw, received a hero's welcome in Jerusalem.

But this magnificent gesture will only achieve its objective if it leads to reasonable and conciliatory negotiations with compromises made by both sides. The Egyptian President can lead the hopes of the peace-loving world: if he acts as though his initiative entitles him to unquestioning acceptance of his demands. The Israelis have demonstrated both willingness to negotiate and unwillingness to bow to demands or ultimatums.

That is why the prevailing opinion in the United States, so different from the consensus here, is that thus far Israel has done all it can give while Egypt's only response has been to ask for more.

William Frankel

The crucial question as the Malta talks begin

Rhodesia: can Britain still be the peacemaker?

When the log-jam breaks and the trees go rushing down the river, "torn into groups, no one can see exactly how they will land up. That is what is happening with Rhodesia. And that is why today the Foreign Secretary finds himself in (of all places) Malta, meeting the leaders of the guerrilla alliance, the Patriotic Front, whose followers are spread out in camps in Mozambique and Zambia.

It is a strange occasion but an important one. While Mr. Smith, the Rhodesian Premier, appears to be on the point of working out a constitutional settlement for his war-weary country with the African leaders in Salisbury, Bishop Muzorewa, the Rev. Ndabandabi Sithole and Chief Chirau, Dr. Owen is parleying with their rivals outside Rhodesia. What, any fair-minded person might wonder, is really going on?

The fact that Dr. Owen's policy has been so strongly criticized at different times by all the parties concerned, and even now is widely misunderstood in Britain, suggests that it has, paradoxically, certain distinctive merits. After all, in a compromise everyone should by definition be making some kind of concession—what may at first seem more painful than the prize which each may be getting in return.

What is British policy? It is to get a settlement in Rhodesia which works, and can be seen to work. Something which merely looks like a settlement, and which does not end the war, would be no settlement at all.

Consider first and foremost the efforts to reach a settlement made by Mr. Smith, the former Royal Air Force pilot and latter-day "rebel" who

keeps on demanding that Britain should "get off his back". If Mr. Smith can reach agreement with the Africans in his country, many people argue, why should he be so? What business is it of Britain to interfere?

The answer is that the kind of settlement which Mr. Smith looks like procuring will not satisfy the Africans fighting outside Rhodesia, whose struggle has brought the Rhodesian regime thus far towards a settlement; it will not satisfy the other countries of Africa, who in the Organization of African Unity represent, like it or not, the touchstone of international recognition; and in such circumstances it will hardly satisfy the administration in Washington or the Government—and the House of Commons—in Westminster.

The legal responsibility for granting independence to the former colony.

There are two basic things wrong with Mr. Smith's plans, so far as they are known. First, he is insisting on two separate voting rolls, one for the 240,000 whites and one for the 6,000,000 blacks. What kind of "universal suffrage" is that? Second, so far as can be judged, Mr. Smith seems to believe that he himself, the man who has defied international opinion for all these years, will continue in the new government. Is that really conceivable?

All right, the case can be made, if the Africans in Rhodesia can see their way round these obstacles, by constitutional devices of one kind or another, that the British should object. But even dismissing British objections, as presum-

uous, the nationalists outside Rhodesia led by the Patriotic Front will go on fighting. The war will not end, sanctions will remain, and the international community will continue to hound the new regime, while threatening South Africa with an oil embargo. That is not a settlement which means anything.

Either the new African leadership, of Bishop Muzorewa and Co., would remain puppets of the Rhodesian Front, which would exercise real power in the country; or the Africans, in their turn, would face the identical problem of coming to terms with their co-nationalists outside the country, in seeking international backing.

This is where the Patriotic Front comes into the picture. Its men are doing the fighting, admittedly, not very fully. But Mr. Nkomo is building up his forces in Zambia, with Cuban training, rather effectively; they have not been committed to the field and remain a powerful threat. In addition they are supposed to have Soviet anti-aircraft rockets which could, if properly deployed, wreak havoc on the Rhodesian air force. And behind them lies the possibility of direct intervention by Soviet-backed Cuban "advisers".

How is the Patriotic Front to be satisfied? The Anglo-American plan presented in the British White Paper offered a practical settlement for Rhodesia, based on free and fair elections, with the prospect of safeguards and compensation for the white minority. Mr. Nkomo and Mr. Mugabe, zealous to hold full power in their own hands, consumed with hatred for the Rhodesian Front, and

in Mr. Mugabe's case, one judges, highly contemptuous of Britain as the "colonial" power, found this plan weak and wanting.

They did not wholly reject it, however. Their main objections seem to centre on the transitional period between the ending of the Smith regime and the elections to usher in an independent Africa-led Zimbabwe. In particular they mistrusted the role assigned to the Commissioner-designate, Field Marshal Lord Carrer. The fact that the Patriotic Front is bringing legal advisers to Malta, though, implies that it is now ready to discuss some practical arrangements.

At all events, what Dr. Owen is seeking in Malta is the Patriotic Front's endorsement of the Anglo-American proposals on Rhodesia. If he gets it—and the chances are not very fair—then Britain will be in a position to try to bridge the talks to Rhodesia with the more cautious Rhodesia, some how to bring everyone into line.

Obviously that would be far from easy, because apart from everything else the Rhodesian nationalists have been saying appalling things about each other and, beyond that, tribal rivalry between the Ndebele in the west and the Shona in the east seems to be growing. Still, the log-jam in Rhodesia has been well and truly broken. The momentum to favour Foreign Office work is now running. In all this movement lies the worthy hope of achieving a real settlement this year.

David Spanier

Diplomatic Correspondent

Why Labour swept the board in the 1945 election



Attlee in Limehouse on the eve of the poll.

the women's vote. Not only bad women but conscripted into the forces and industry, where they became more socially and politically conscious, but the woman who had been left behind at home was not forgotten.

The Daily Mirror ran a whole campaign specifically aimed at her. It had begun with a wife who wanted to know how she should vote on behalf of her Service husband. The paper's editor, Guy Bartholomew, found the simple answer in the question of his cartoonist Philip Zec: "How can we vote for him?" The slogan "Vote for him" had so much more meaning for the electors than an exhortation to vote Labour.

Although Labour did not fully realize it at the time, the voters it most expressed the collective will. It seemed the party of social justice. The overwhelming feeling in the summer of 1945 was "never again". People did not want a return to pre-war ways, two nations and the same old mistakes that had led to a Second World War.

The legacy of that war—a people's war—was collectivism; of all being in it together. It was a total war. All classes, rich and poor, both sexes, all ages were drawn much more completely into the struggle. They came out of it with

great expectations. High among them was the implementation of the Beveridge Report, which had gripped the public imagination since its publication in 1942.

It outlined a social security system covering people from the cradle to the grave and a campaign of capital building, basic level of subsistence below which nobody should fall. No one in Britain willing to work, while he could, should be without income sufficient to meet at all times the essential needs of himself and his family. Beveridge envisaged family allowances for all children, maternity benefits, the provision of a National Health Service and assumed that mass unemployment could be avoided.

The war with Hitler brought to the British people full employment and a prosperity that some had only dreamed of. The value of the common man as a member of society and in hard cash terms was recognized. People were wanted, exhorted to work. There was no going back on that.

In a sense a revolution had occurred in society and the old order of official recognition of it. The changes though were such an accepted part of the way of life that few realized what they added up to. Harold Macmillan asked the electors at Stockton when they had

finished, with his election address to remember to put it out for national salvage.

Wilfred Brown tried unsuccessfully to canvass the staff at Buckingham Palace and Peggy Ashcroft succeeded at Number 10.

The post-Reichen BBC was not so much "Nation broadcasting unto Nation" as a nation broadcasting unto itself. Even when people went to the cinema to relax they saw more of a new society and less of Hollywood dream world. They saw on the screen people like themselves at home, at work, at war. And they were the heroes on the screen might not be that they were heroes in real life and deserving of a hero's bappy ending?

The electorate in 1945 was serious, thoughtful, anxious to get at "the facts". There was an eagerness to learn. In the long nights and the periods of boredom many enlarged their horizons by reading about and discussing subjects they would never have contemplated. Including the kind of world they were entering when this lot was over. "Postwar reconstruction" was a favourite topic among all sorts of groups, many of them by no means political.

Ideas for the future showed a tremendous idealism often naive—as in some of the Crown Film Unit productions—but all the more sincere for it. People who had been starved of ideas during the war were suddenly free to hear and express them. This was especially true of the young. While one 14-year-old girl was picking peas for a farmer near Ormskirk she was praying that Attlee and his local candidate would win. The candidate was the young Harold Wilson.

Having experienced the fellowship of common danger, the electorate was even ethical. As Donald Soper puts it: "1945 was the last of the old-fashioned types of election at which religion as an ecclesiastical entity played a part." It seems that nothing in the run-up to the next general election is going to belie that statement.

William Harrington and Peter Young

William Harrington and Peter Young 1978. The 1945 Revolution, published today by Davis-Poynter, £5.50.

Eric Heffer

Beware of swopping the Lords for something worse

An elected second chamber would not be content with the limited power of the present House of Lords

It becomes clearer every day that it is only a matter of time before we see the abolition of the House of Lords. Not only does the Labour Party want this, but it also appears, if press reports are to be believed, that the Tories now accept that the House of Lords should be completely reformed, with a majority of elected members. Also, last year, in order to avoid abolishing the Labour Lords put forward a policy of reform.

There are few politicians nowadays who would defend the present House of Lords. The arguments advanced by the abolitionists that it is an outdated, non-elected, undemocratic institution, inappropriate to a modern democratic system of government, are now accepted. Future argument therefore will take place around what should replace it, and whether it ought to be replaced at all.

The Labour Party, in a statement which was carried at last year's annual conference, says: "The most straightforward and practical course would be to abolish the second chamber altogether." The conference urged that the next Labour manifesto should contain the words: "Should we become the government after the next general election, we intend to abolish the House of Lords. No doubt given such an electoral mandate, the Lords would agree to this, but should they not, we would be prepared to use the Parliament Act, or advise the Queen to use her prerogative powers to ensure this."

Unless something else was done this would remove the Lords' complete veto on the extension of the life of a House of Commons beyond five years. To safeguard the electors' rights therefore we propose that such extension should be subject to approval by a referendum, or in time of war, by two-thirds majority of the House of Commons.

But the passing of such a statement in itself does not guarantee that it will find its way in these precise terms in the manifesto. This has been highlighted by the recent arguments over the Bill for Direct Elections to the European Assembly. Twice Labour's conference has come out against direct elections, and twice it has been ignored by a Labour Government.

However, now that the Tories are clearly about to join the chorus urging changes in the Lords, the chances are increasing that Labour's manifesto will more than likely contain the proposal that the Lords should go.

The question then arises, should there be a second chamber, or should we follow the lead of New Zealand and Sweden and have a unicameral parliamentary system?

The very idea of only one House creates the immediate response among Tory politicians and writers that Labour intend to establish a dictatorship, such a proposal being a further step towards an East-European, communist type society. In such an atmosphere it is difficult to get a rational discussion. Yet rational debate is desirable, because it is a matter of importance for the country to be able to reach a sensible conclusion.

There are certain functions which the House of Lords carries out which will need to be continued following abolition. These can be handled either by a reconstituted second chamber or by a drastically reformed House of Commons. The role of the House of Lords as a supreme appeals court is not, in my view, a serious problem. The Supreme Court could continue, or would need to be tied to Parliament.

I am not suggesting that the Appeals Court be turned into a constitutional Supreme Court as in the United States of America, or that something of the kind is increasingly being argued for by those calling for a written constitution with a Bill of Rights.

It is Labour's contention that a second chamber is unnecessary. On the other hand, the Tories seem to want a reformed Lords with a membership of between 400 and 500, two thirds of whom would be elected, and one third life or hereditary peers. They further argue that the powers of the House of Lords remain basically the same.

The Tory proposals raise several important issues. Firstly, even though the second chamber would be partially democratically elected, it would continue

to contain an undemocratic element. Many of the members would continue to be appointed by the Prime Minister, perpetuating his power.

Secondly, how would the second chamber be elected? Would it be on the basis of proportional representation, as proposed by the Bow Group, or would it be first past the post, and if so, how would the minorities be drawn up? Then there is the vital question of the second chamber's powers. It is obvious that an elected second chamber, if only partially elected, would not be content with the limited powers of the present House of Lords and would demand greater powers.

The two houses could most probably work, or involved in conflict over which was the best. Such proposals are there for almost continuous discussion.

Conservative MPs like man Lamont welcome a second chamber elected by proportional representation as the way to slow down the speed at which the Commons turns into law. Such a view line with the statement made Lord Simon, who said, "It is difficult to believe this suggestion for nation started at the work table. Naturally, I have a very strong feeling about it, but I cannot believe the average workman about that sort of thing."

It is clear from such comments that a second chamber would be seen as a brake on progress, as has been the case of the House of Lords in the past.

The one important function of the Lords is that of up and revising legislation. When it arrives in the Commons it is the following abolition function would be tried out by a reformed House of Commons. This would be an insuperable difficulty, especially as the revising functions have been exaggerated.

It is on these and allied issues that the Labour NEC subcommittee on Machinery of Government is now working. The Labour Party statement on the abolition of the House of Lords says: "There is in any case a need for reforming the p. The House of Commons, and we intend to carry forward full statement setting out proposals for reform. How in relation to the diddy and revising functions at carried out by the House of Lords, it is proposed that special form of select committee should be set up to legislate after it has received its third reading."

There is a place for subcommittees in the Commons provided they do not become too dominant and weaker diminish the chamber of House of Commons. In the interests of democracy it is that the following abolition function would be tried out by a reformed House of Commons, and we intend to carry forward full statement setting out proposals for reform. How in relation to the diddy and revising functions at carried out by the House of Lords, it is proposed that special form of select committee should be set up to legislate after it has received its third reading."

The battle lines over future of the Lords are being drawn up. The danger as I see it is unless we are very careful getting rid of the Lords, could end up with a second chamber not fully democratic and with additional power which in many ways would worse than the present situation. That is what the rest of 1968 would have brought about.

In the interests of good democratic government, therefore we need a reformed House of Commons continuing to be a check to the will of the people.

The author is Labour MP Liverpool, Warrington.

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LEAPMAN IN AMERICA

Only 10 years ago, black students were in a minority at Andrew Jackson High School in Queens, on the eastern edge of New York City. Now, only two of the 2,500 pupils are white, and court action has been taken to determine whether it should remain effectively a single-race school.

Andrew Jackson is one of a number of New York schools to suffer what is known as "upping". As soon as more than half a school's pupils are black, the racial split quickly gathers momentum until all white students disappear. The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, in association with a group of parents, has taken the New York Board of Education to court to have the school desegregated. A decision is expected in the next few weeks, but whichever way it goes there is likely to be an appeal.

Supporters of the court action say that it is wrong for

children to be educated in a group exclusively of their own race (although most of the teachers are white). They also fear that because there are no white students the school will be given low priority by the state in terms of funding and facilities.

Mr. Murray Bromberg, the headmaster, disagrees. "There are people who have the feeling that if you have an all-black school you have a poor school," he said. "Now historically, that's correct. All-black schools have been substandard. So people imagine that at all of them you get kids running all over, mugging, each other and hitting teachers: that they're a place to stay away from."

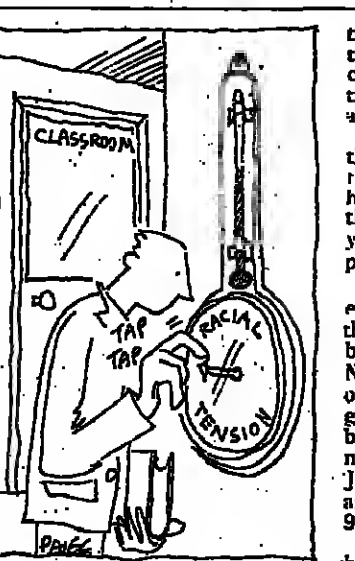
"But that's not true. A black school can be a good school. Racial hostilities don't exist. Kids are relaxed. This is their turf. There's a kind of warm feeling about the school." It is a large sand-coloured

building, constructed 40 years ago in an institutional style of architecture. Surrounding it are streets of low terraced houses, with ragged patches of lawn in front, occupied largely by the middle-class blacks who send their children to Andrew Jackson.

Behind the school is an area of construction and excavation which will soon be a million-dollar sports complex with facilities for American football, soccer, tennis and athletics. The thinking behind the creation of this amenity, and behind the introduction of special art and music courses, was to attract white students back into the school. It has not worked.

Mr. Bromberg joined the school in 1968, when 52 per cent of the students were white. "It was a very well integrated school," he says. "I guess it was the ideal of integrated schools."

The following year there was



a 5 per cent change. We became majority black. Before we knew it we were 90 per cent black in a few years. In

this city when a school tips it tips very rapidly. But you could be on it for a very long time with 80 per cent white and 20 per cent black.

"As soon as you get more than half black in a school then the whites sell their homes to blacks and move to the suburbs, or they put their youngsters into private and parochial schools."

One suggestion by supporters of the integration suit is that white pupils should be brought to the school from Nassau County on Long Island, outside the city boundary. No great travelling distance would be involved. The nearest high school to Andrew Jackson is in Nassau County and is only two miles away. It is 95 per cent white.

The people of Nassau County have already indicated their disapproval of such ideas. "We can envisage World War Three breaking out if they have to send their kids to the city and city kids go to the

suburbs," Mr. Bromberg remarked. The school does not now suffer from the severe discipline problems of some other black high schools. This is because, in an area of terraced houses, most pupils come from more stable family backgrounds than those who live in rickety blocks of flats in the South Bronx and Harlem. Yet, as in many city schools, truancy is too high and hard to combat.

Touring the classrooms, I was struck by the application shown by the students as well as by the calm and apparent good order. What many do suffer from, though, are learning disabilities. "Three quarters of the students are two years or more below their grade level in reading," Mr. Bromberg said. "They come here with poor skills. Some are four, five or six years below standard."

The children arrive at Andrew Jackson when they reach the ninth grade, or at about 15 years old. The junior high schools are allowed to keep them only for an extra year if they are backward in any subjects. Then they have to go to high school, however poor their performance.

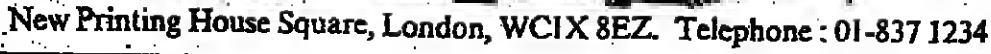
Mr. Bromberg says that the intense remedial courses in English and mathematics which his school offers are effective, and nearly all the students go on to some form of higher education. Federal money is available for remedial classes for disadvantaged students.

Like all New York schools, Andrew Jackson had to give up some of its optional programmes during the city budget crisis two years ago. Yet there is still a pleasing amount of advanced gadgetry in some of the classrooms. In one, children were happily playing electronic games and wearing earphones; which meant that they could hear what they were playing, but

nobody else except the teacher could. In another, pupils were doing mathematics with help of adding machines. Students are encouraged to learn to type, and a few take specialized courses such as skills as dancing a photograph.

It seems, judging from brief visit, to be a well-run school, doing the best it can with the material available. The NAACP contends that if the material available included white children, expectations and standards would rise, to everyone's benefit. The argument that, with integration removed, the child can better get on with the white is also powerful.

The court will rule whether keeping Andrew Jackson as a one-race school is legal. Whether it is socially desirable is a separate question, on which there is a universal agreement.



The House of Commons may ground and lower yields by an amount of

HINA'S ECONOMIC PRIORITIES

David Wood

grounds and lower yields by prudently managed exploitation of British waters (newly enlarged to a zone 200 miles wide or to the median line) is curtailed by the arrangements of the Community's common fisheries policy—which, it is necessary to repeat, was put together to the satisfaction of the Six on the eve of the Community's enlargement to nine, and swallowed by our negotiators.

The fishing industry makes only a small contribution to the national product, though its prosperity is of great moment to the regions in which it is concentrated. But it is not just for the benefit of the fishing industry that Mr Silkin's insistence is to be applauded. Fish in the waters surrounding the British Isles are a plentiful and renewable resource which is at serious risk of desolation. It is of the widest importance that measures be adopted which permit effective conservation and optimum exploitation.

The principle of the Community's fisheries policy is that the fish in Community waters are a Community resource and that the fishermen of all member states should have equal access to the waters of all member states. The method by which the policy proceeds is to set, on the basis of scientific opinion, an annual 'total allowable catch' for each main species, to divide the total by averaging each state's quota to the member states, to promulgate any further measures of conservation that the Commission thinks necessary, and to invite the coastal states to enforce and police these provisions.

In principle, such a regime should be able to meet the requirements of conservation and optimum exploitation, since some fish are an advantage in preservation over others; and again the award of quotas is able to take care of legitimate claims of the states. It is right to press the case for the United Kingdom and Ireland, though the put forward by them have been significant in most respects, doubt remains requirements on properly insists moderated within framework to which mission adheres.

As a means of catch quotas are skippers nor port sufficiently scrupulous. Direct effort, altogether Euro-bagging the determination measures: politics to science. Recent experience attempts to limit due to other special fishing of illustrates the point rest of the Community itself ready to se out of the fish proportionate to, putting in. There insist on a twelve zone, a clear preference, direct limitation, and a greater say state in the fish well as the end non-discriminatory measures.

which ended with the guillotining of French filibusters at the turn of this century. Even in recent years groups of backbenchers have had to be driven out of the House by the City brewery horses suddenly put out to grass. Who forgets the ill-fated bill introduced by the Liberal Alliance led by a Mr Michael Foot which failed to be confused with his name? The Leader of the House and the Speaker have to be off to the Balkans to reform the House of Lords? No; it has happened before, though last week there were new characteristics. First, the uprisings occurred on several distinct issues. Second, they occurred in an election year when customarily Government backbenchers become biddable to their "chief" for the good of the party and their own future. I dislike other commentators. I am not sure for last week, to Mr John Peyton, rather than to the formidable and dour Mr George Cunningham, who played the devil with the Devolution Bill, or Mr Michael English, one of the few backbenchers with a "strong" opinion. I am not sure for last week, to Mr John Peyton, rather than to the formidable and dour Mr George Cunningham, who played the devil with the Devolution Bill, or Mr Michael English, one of the few backbenchers with a "strong" opinion. I am not sure for last week, to Mr John Peyton, rather than to the formidable and dour Mr George Cunningham, who played the devil with the Devolution Bill, or Mr Michael English, one of the few backbenchers with a "strong" opinion.

carried out.
Mr Bean's speech is a timely reminder that a Labour victory at the next general election would take us a long way down the road to 'Eastern European serfdom'.
Yours, etc,
REG PRENTICE,
House of Commons.
January 26.

Control of V & A Museum
From Mrs E. C. Herzog
Sir, Dr Roy Strong (*The Times*, January 25) is quoted as saying: "The fate of the Victoria and Albert Museum is in the public's hands". Then let the public help.
Volunteers should be allowed to fill the staff vacancies and a fee should be charged at all public museums and galleries. This could also be collected by volunteers. No elaborate machinery is needed. Practical selfhelp, as practised by the Victorians. (Mr Spalding's letter, January 26) is required, not another Committee.
I offer one day a week.
Yours faithfully
BILDEGARD HFRZOG
81 Marsh House, Road,
Sheffield.
January 27.

From Miss H. Lowenthal.
Sir, The question of who should control the V and A has been highlighted by the depressing steps backward which this museum has taken in recent months. Some of these steps are obviously due to the cutback on expenditure, others to ineptitude as well as financial stringency.
The point is that the public has no opportunity of expressing its feelings, and this at a time when more people than ever visit museums, attend lectures and crowd

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African progress in Rhodesia

Jobs for minorities

From Dr L. D. Barron
Single copy, including article

The Catholic left

From *Mr Christopher Derrick*
 Sir, Mr Kenneth Leech informs us
 (January 26) that "Catholic" theology,
 if it is taken seriously, is con-
 vided to lead its adherents to the
 left rather than the right. To be a
 Catholic and a Conservative is theo-
 logically impossible.
 I am hereby reminded of those
 numerous Catholics, past and pre-
 sent, who have expressed equally
 dogmatic certainty that their Faith
 if taken seriously—oblives one to
 subscribe to some sort of royalist,
 clerico-Fascist, or otherwise right
 wing vision of politics and society.
 May I suggest that a gross non-
 sequitur is involved in either case?
 From the Catholic side, is it not
 "preposterous" extremely difficult
 to make any clear cut inference of
 the political or social or economic
 drift, apart from certain very broad
 principles of morality; and in so
 far as any such inference could be
 made, it would have more in com-
 mon with the thought of people like
 K. Chesterton and E. F. Schu-

But it could be argued that while
 the "right" has (by Christian and
 Catholic standards) one characteris-
 tic fault or sin, the "left" has two.
 The "right" is habitually guilty of
 hardness of heart, of a certain de-
 ficiency in compassion, in military
 virtues as it were. The "left" is
 guilty in economic. But the
 "left" is habitually guilty of (a) a
 monstrous, Pharisaism or self
 righteousness, as though it had a
 monopoly of virtue, and (b) a quasi-
 Manichaean hatred... of the present
 reality.

On such lines, it might be pos-
 sible to regard the infallibility of
 Pope Leech as somewhat less theo-
 logical. Even the "wearisome" and
 "agreeable" Ronald Butt may
 have made a good point (January
 19).

Yours sincerely,
 CHRISTOPHER DERRICK,
 25 Park Hill Road,
 Watlington,
 Surrey.
 January 26.

From Mr. John Derrick . . .

Sharing Holy Communion

The banning of 'Scum'

Music on Radio 3

From Mrs Margaret I. Dilks
 Sir, Yes, I can tell Sir Thomas
 Armstrong (later, January 25) of
 a better start to the day than
 yesterday, No 3 and that is Jesus
 Galway playing. I know not what
 on Radio 4. At 6.35 we get the first
 half of the work and at 6.55 the
 second half.
 Being a chronic insomniac I must
 tell Mr Osbourne (January 25) that
 have often felt like helping the
 All this in spite of being both
 Bar' and a bird lover.
 Yours faithfully,
 MARGARET I. DILKS.
 2 The Courtyard,
 Alcot Park,
 Berkshire.
 From Mr C. J. Harris.
 Sir, Could I suggest that nothing
 written before 1830 - should be
 yours faithfully
 HARRIS HARRIS,
 Bernard Gardens,
 Wimbledon, SW19.



COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM
January 29: Divine Service was held in St Lawrence's Church, Sandringham, this morning.
The Reverend Canon Alan Gledhill preached the sermon.
Mr. C. Jackson and Mr. B. Humphrey had the honour of being received by The Queen when Her Majesty decorated them with the Royal Victorian Medal (Silver).

A memorial service for Senator Hubert Humphrey will be held at the American Church, Tottenham Court Road, London, on February 2 at 11 a.m.

A memorial service for Professor Bruce Dickinson will be held in Corpus Christi College chapel, Cambridge, at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday, February 4, 1978.

Birthdays today
Sir Herbert Ashworth, 68; Lord Berners, 79; Sir Frank Catherwood, 79; Sir Leslie Farnham, 78; Miss Christina Foyle, 67; Sir Foley News, 69; Professor A. G. Ouston, 67; Mr. Louis Ceman, 64; Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, 76.

Memorial service
Professor J. C. Mott
A memorial service for Professor John Chasman Mott took place at the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford, on Saturday. The Rev. Dr. W. Brown, Dean of the church, officiated, assisted by the Rev. J. C. Mott. The service was held in the presence of a large number of guests.

Marriages
Mr. P. Alfrey and Miss C. E. Carder
The marriage took place at Chelsea Register Office on January 27 of Mr. Peter Alfrey, younger son of Mr. and Mrs. P. Alfrey, and Miss C. E. Carder, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Carder, of Cheltenham.

Christenings
The infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Dove was christened at St. Mary's Church, Longstaff, on Saturday, January 28, 1978. The godparents are Viscountess Lanning, Mr. Simon Dove, the Hon. Mrs. Charles Wilson, Mrs. Carolyn Humes and Miss Sarah Morgans.

Latest wills
Latest estates include (net, before tax paid):
Baxter, Mr. Frederick Pearson, of Leigh-on-Sea, bank manager, £22,485.
Budge, Rev. Edward Anthony, of Whitley, £140,487.
Goldman, Mr. Frank, of Cheshire, £18,706.
Haggar, Mr. John, of Skipton, £36,740.
Keith, Mrs. Adeline, of Chobham, Surrey, £277,200.
Pemberton, Mr. Douglas, of St. Agnes, Cornwall, £404,753.
Small, Mr. Francis William, of Taunton, farmer, £139,891.
Bower, Mr. William, of Liskeard, Cornwall, intestate, £154,976.

Dances and cocktail parties, 1978
A list of some of the dances and cocktail parties arranged to take place during 1978 will be published on March 6. It will be revised and repeated on May 1 and again on July 3. The charge for inclusion in the list is £7, in two lists £3 and in three lists £5. Inquiries should be made to Court and Social Advertising, The Times, PO Box 7, New Printing House, 100 Strand, London WC2N 2LZ (telephone 01-837 1234, ext. 7363).

£50,000 winner
The weekly £50,000 Premium Savings Bond prize, announced on Saturday, was won by 25K 040427. The winner lives in Essex.
The £25,000 winners are:
1. 25K 040427
2. 25K 040427
3. 25K 040427
4. 25K 040427
5. 25K 040427
6. 25K 040427
7. 25K 040427
8. 25K 040427
9. 25K 040427
10. 25K 040427

Assessing big institutions' land

Evidence reaching the Northfield committee on the ownership of farmland will enable it to come closer to unravelling one of our great social mysteries. More than three-quarters of the United Kingdom is still rural, yet there is on central registry to show planners who own the land.

One difficulty facing the committee, which was set up last year by Mr. S. J. M. Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, is that the evidence is sometimes inconsistent. That can be seen in submissions about one of the most contentious issues in farming: the amount of land held by financial institutions and the way they run it.

There are inevitably differences in emphasis. The National Farmers' Union and its Scottish counterpart say, in a joint submission, that the price the institutions can pay because of their fiscal advantages have a very considerable effect, especially in certain areas.

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors accepts that demand by institutions contributes to the rise in land prices. It continues: "It is our experience that, as pressure on land prices is also being achieved because existing owner-occupiers are anxious to add additional acreage to that which they already farm."

There are also direct clashes in the evidence. The farming unions say: "There is no doubt that the financial institutions have become significant owners of land in Scotland in recent years." The Scottish Landowners' Federation says: "We do not believe that there is yet any significant trend in institutional buying in Scotland."

Evidence to the committee shows that purchases by financial institutions have increased in the 1970s. The committee has been

Obstacles to a short cut to Christian unity

By Clifford Longley
Religious Affairs Correspondent

Whether he intended to do so or not, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Coggan, has greatly encouraged those many church members who long for a short cut to Christian unity by outflanking both the theologians and the lawyers in one surge of popular feeling.

Opinion in the Roman Catholic Church and in the Church of England is divided about the wisdom of this headlong approach, for though Dr. Coggan has undoubtedly judged the Anglican mood fairly correctly, he may well have misjudged the Roman Catholic Church.

There are Anglicans who feel that doctrinal differences matter so much that intercommunion would be a mistake. They are almost all confined to the evangelical wing, however, and not all evangelicals would agree, anyway.

Roman Catholic policy on intercommunion is both entrenched and long standing, on the other hand, and reflects deeply held views on the nature of the church.

This is a sensitive moment. Last week Dr. Coggan made a remarkable appeal to Rome, one to which he was personally and passionately committed. This week Cardinal Ruffini addresses the general synod: expectations of that were

Appointments in the Forces

Royal Navy
Vice-Admiral Sir J. H. M. Foster to be Admiral of the Fleet, 1980.
Vice-Admiral Sir J. H. M. Foster to be Admiral of the Fleet, 1980.
Vice-Admiral Sir J. H. M. Foster to be Admiral of the Fleet, 1980.

Parliamentary notices

House of Commons
Today at 2.30: Debate on employment. Motion on the Government's proposals for a new minimum wage.
Tomorrow at 2.30: Progress in committee on Scotland Bill.

Keen buyers for Japanese works of art

By Geraldine Norman
Sale Room Correspondent

A sale of Japanese works of art, primarily netsuke and inro, held by Sotheby's, was a success. The auction total of £107,000 was above the high estimate of £80,000.

A dealer from Hawaii paid several of the top prices, including £13,000 (estimate £2,000-£3,000) for a wooden netsuke of a man on a horse, and £5,000 (estimate £2,000-£3,000) for a wooden netsuke of a man on a horse.



Members of the King's Army on parade in London yesterday to commemorate the execution of Charles I.

Exhibition of alternative use for churches

By John Young
Farming Reporter

An exhibition which opens tomorrow at Church House, Westminster, attempts to portray the Church Commissioners as conscientious guardians of the nation's architectural heritage, in spite of the views of conservationists who maintain that the commissioners have taken a cavalier attitude to historic buildings and to those who oppose for religious reasons the sale or disposal of redundant churches for secular purposes.

Swedish pairs first and third in bridge

By Our Bridge Correspondent

Sweden took first and third places in the Swedish Times International Pairs Bridge Championship, which ended last night at Per-Olof Sundelin and Sven Forstberg, the reigning European champions, led triumphantly from the beginning of the four-day tournament.

Wordsworth appeal

The trustees of Dove Cottage, Wordsworth's home in Grasmere, are seeking a new owner for the building, which is in a state of disrepair. The trustees are hoping to raise £15,000 to restore the building to its former glory.

Closure of art galleries

Seven of the galleries housing the Wallace Collection in London have been closed, some for six months, others longer, while structural work began two years ago is carried out preparatory to the installation of a new wing.

Science report

Astronomy: Detecting tin in the Sun
The solar system is thought to have condensed out of a primordial cloud of gas and dust. From that assumption scientists have produced a theory that explains the production and present abundance of chemical elements, but there are some discrepancies. One of the longer standing difficulties has been overcome by Dr. M. S. Allen, of Hawaii University.

Obstacles to a short cut to Christian unity

By Clifford Longley
Religious Affairs Correspondent

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS NEWS

Oldham
for industrial
development

D. GARDNER
line at Oldham
bookings breed
optimism in
holiday trade,
age 17

Brussels warns Tokyo envoy of need to buy more from Europe

Michael Hornsby, Brussels, Jan 29
During a visit to the European Commission in Brussels on the weekend, Mr Nobuhiko Kihara, the Japanese Minister for External Economic Affairs, is told "politely but firmly" the EEC's doubts about the adequacy of the measures taken to reduce Japan's growing reliance on trade with the Community.

A similar message, coupled with a warning that pressure for protectionist action by EEC countries would become irresistible if Japan continued to restrict its exports without providing more, had already been conveyed to Mr Ushiba in London, Paris and Geneva, where he called before leaving in Brussels.

From a position of rough parity in 1970, Japanese surplus trade with the EEC has steadily risen to an estimated \$5,000m (about £2,500m) a year. The percentage of Japan's exports to the Community has risen from 19.1 per cent in 1970 to 29.9 per cent in 1977.

Mr Roy Jenkins, President of the European Commission, and Mr Wilhelm Haferkamp, the Internal Affairs Commissioner, and Mr Ushiba they were sceptical that Japan's present

Two domestic Japanese airlines are understood to be in the market for about 20 A300s, a joint Franco-German-Dutch venture. Hawker Siddeley supplies the wings for the aircraft.

Mr Ushiba was reminded that EEC foreign ministers would be reviewing the implications of the Japanese measures, and the prospects of turning round the trade deficit, at their next meeting in Brussels on February 7. He was also told that a decision to buy the European A300 Airbus would be an important sign that the Japanese were in earnest.

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Pit productivity schemes expected to pay for themselves three times over Coal Board predicts 10pc increase in output

By Paul Routledge
Labour Editor
The National Coal Board expects coal output to rise by about 10 per cent to 118 million tons a year in 1978-79 now that all miners are participating in pit productivity schemes.

Some face workers are already earning the £135 a week being demanded by their union, but the incentive schemes are expected to pay for themselves three times over.

These are the findings of a Business News analysis of the industry's shift to productivity bargaining after several years of falling output and intense political strife within the National Union of Mineworkers over the issue.

NCB chiefs will be able to report in the February 13 meeting of the Energy Commission that the three-year slide in production has been reversed. By today, half the industry's coal faces, some 700, are working to incentive schemes and virtually every pit is recording output in readiness for the changeover.

The productivity schemes, which give face men £23.50 a week for achieving 100 per cent of an agreed production target, have no upper limit and bonuses of £50 a week on top of the basic wage of £71 have been earned by some Staffordshire colliers.

In Nottinghamshire, where the revolt against a pithead ballot narrowly rejecting incentive schemes triggered the NUM's policy about-turn, the coalfield average bonus is £27 a week.

Pay bargaining on the union's official conference claim for £135 basic rate at the face, with corresponding rises elsewhere, starts in earnest on Thursday.

The NCB is expected to make an offer within the Government's 10 per cent guidelines, arguing that to concede the men's 92 per cent demand would eliminate coal's price advantage over oil.

Deep-mined output to 1977-78, which looked dangerously like slipping below 100 million tons for the first time in 60 years, is now expected to reach about 105 million tons during the current financial year.

This will put the NCB into the black, marginally, but enough to set aside something for investment to supplement the £400m a year the Government is pumping into the industry's capital development.

Sir Derek Ezra, chairman of the coal board, told Business News: "The move on to an incentive scheme honours the undertaking that the board and the unions gave to the Government in 1974 when the tripartite report on the future of the coal industry, leading to the current investment programme, was agreed. The country will now get a better return on that investment."

"One of the effects of the wide-spread debate in the industry that preceded the introduction of the scheme has been that everyone is talking and thinking about output and productivity in a way we have not known for several years. This must be good."

"The scheme will generate more revenue to pay higher wages to help finance a greater proportion of the capital investment programme without recourse to borrowing, and help us to limit price increases in a way that

would not have been possible without it.

"The results so far show that the industry now has this, as well as the capacity and equipment, to reverse the downward trend in output and productivity which has persisted throughout the last three years."

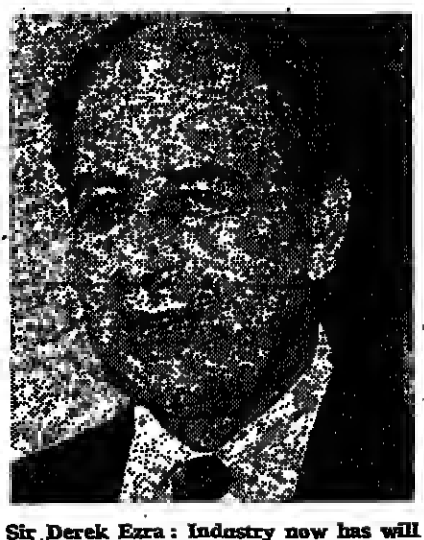
Whitbaird closely scrutinized the local incentive proposals before being convinced that they were genuinely self-financing.

In fact, because the extra output is marginal tonnage, produced after standing charges and basic wages have been paid, at £20 a ton it is a very profitable exercise. The board calculated that an increase of 3 to 4 per cent in production would pay for the wage bonuses. They are now confidently expecting 10 per cent.

Output at some pits is spectacular. At Kellingley, a north Yorkshire pit ranked as the test bed for the new Selby coalfield, production from one face alone has reached 20,000 tons a week, or a million tons a year—the equivalent of two average collieries.

One side effect of the introduction of pit incentives is improved attendance. Coal Board officials attribute this to the existence of a tangible reward for actually going to work every day, instead of occasionally "taking" (taking time off).

But though the schemes have been operating only a matter of days, at most weeks, in most coalfields, the men are already talking about "indexation" of their output bonuses, so that as the cost of living rises so does their reward.



Sir Derek Ezra: Industry now has will to reverse downward trend.

for greater output. This proposal is likely to figure in the forthcoming pay talks.

Pit deaths decline: The fatal accident rate for coal mines fell to its lowest level in 1976—the latest year available, according to Mr Alex Eadie, Under Secretary at the Department of Energy. Fifty men were killed in the mines in 1976 compared with 64 in 1975, and for the first time the accident rate fell to below 100 per 100,000 man-shifts worked.

Numerous brokers point out that the average length of post-war United States business cycles has been slightly more than three years and that, if the averages are any guide, the economy should be sliding into a recession late this year.

But economists say the averages are irrelevant this time because the last recession was far deeper than its predecessors and the recovery has been more sluggish.

The economists fail to realize, some brokers say, that total employment rose by a record four million last year and that since the trough of the recession in March 1975, about 1.5 million new jobs in manufacturing have been created, compared with an average of 1.5 million after a similar time in the previous five postwar cycles.

But such a view is meaningless, the economists reply, because the size of the labour force has grown rapidly and there is still considerable slack in the economy, as reflected in the 6.4 per cent jobless rate.

Utilization levels in industry are still fairly low at 83 per cent, and the prospects of capacity shortages in the near term are highly remote.

Many brokers are not convinced by such logic. They note that new car sales and new housing construction are now at levels higher than they were in 1973, and experts in these industries admit that further significant increases are unlikely.

The brokers add that the latest economic plans of the administration are going to produce higher inflation, higher interest rates, which could generate an evaporation of general consumer and business demand, thus producing a mild recession.

Most economists see only modest inflation and interest rate rises this year and believe President Carter's new proposals will strengthen general business and consumer demand.

Real growth in 1978 of more than 4 per cent is widely predicted, followed by 3.5 to 4 per cent growth in 1979. If there is a mild recession ahead, then it is unlikely to surface before 1980, many economists say.

Even Mr Michael Evans, head of Chase Econometrics and a well-known prophet of gloom and doom, who was predicting a 1979 recession not long ago, has changed his mind.

The sun he is enjoying on his Caribbean holiday may have influenced him, but whatever the cause, he now confidently predicts a 3.9 per cent real growth rate this year and a rate of close to 4.9 per cent in 1979.

Some brokers say it does not really matter whether the traders or the economists are right, as the stock market has already discounted a mild 1978 recession. Indeed, quite a few admit that, when faced with the arguments of economists, their fears of a recession do appear rather unjustified.

However, as one broker noted last week: "I have this feeling deep down in my stomach that the economists are going to be wrong again."

Frank Vogl
in Washington

Unions to demand full Leyland plan details

By Edward Townsend
Mr Michael Edwards, chairman of British Leyland, will face strong demands from shop stewards and union officials this week for complete disclosure of his proposals for reorganizing the car company.

The recent series of consultation meetings at plant level with culminate on Wednesday with a full participation conference at the group's Longbridge assembly plant, when 700 stewards and a large number of full-time officials will hear the Edwards plan.

Mr Edwards, who is already facing deep rifts of opinion among his executives with the strong possibility of further top-level resignations, is certain to be greeted with hostility and suspicion by employee representatives.

He badly needs the backing of the whole Leyland workforce before presenting the company's revised corporate plan to the National Enterprise Board and the Government within the next two months.

His proposal to split Leyland Cars into separate divisions and the loss of 12,000 jobs this year, with a total redundancy probably in excess of 20,000, provides the main concern for shop stewards.

But Mr Edwards will also be urged to divulge his plans for seeking more government financial aid. Hawley, national automotive secretary for the Transport and General Workers' Union, said yesterday: "We are hoping that whatever he has to say, it is in no way a little more light shed."

"We want a comprehensive disclosure of what he proposes. We want all the facts. We expect to be taken into his confidence over the running of the company."

Mr Edwards may not feel able to give details of the current financial performance of Leyland Cars, which is expected to turn in substantial losses for 1977, or elaborate on reports that he is proposing to ask the Government for an additional £400m of equity capital.

British Leyland said yesterday it had received a £25m order from Hongkong for 152 bus chassis, to be built in Wolverhampton.

Sun Alliance to defend pay package

By John Huxley
Sun Alliance and London Insurance will this week consider its response to a letter from Mr Clinton Davis, Under Secretary of State for Trade, which signals the continued determination of the Government to impose sanctions if necessary on the group for allegedly breaching the pay guidelines.

Several meetings, some at ministerial level, have been held between the group and Government since October, when Sun Alliance decided to make its staff pension scheme non-contributory. At the same time, staff received a 9.9 per cent wage settlement.

The Government claims that the package broke the pay guidelines and now appears to be ready to use powers under section 9 of the Contingent Liabilities Act 1973 to restrict insurance premiums.

Last night, Lord Aldington, chairman of Sun Alliance, said he hoped to clarify the position today. However, he added that the group had taken legal advice and remained convinced that it had not breached the pay guidelines.

"In any case, the guidelines have no power in law and I do not believe that the Government has power under any law to impose sanctions."

Despite the threat of sanctions, the Government still gives the group an opportunity to come up with a package of premium reductions which would be equivalent in value to the cost of what it believes is an excessive settlement. It is understood that the figure is about £1m.

Mr Clinton Davis's letter invited the company to suggest ways in which this might be done.

for up to 12 bulk carriers is being investigated by British Shipbuilders. The deal is at very early stage and British Shipbuilders would only say yesterday that it was "following up an inquiry."

The ships, to be used for carrying iron ore, were discussed with the Venezuelan authorities by Dr. Dickson Mabon, the Minister for Energy, when he visited South America recently.

British Shipbuilders is also known to be hoping for a major batch of orders resulting from a proposal by Mexico to make a significant increase to its merchant fleet. The orders could be worth much more than the ships being built for Poland.

Allied Investments in deficit after food loss

By Ray Maughan
Allied Investments, the hospital services group which is the subject of an agreed £8.1m bid from a consortium headed by the National Enterprise Board, suffered a loss of £34,000 in the half-year to October 31, 1977.

This compares with a profit of £309,000 in the corresponding period of 1976. Turnover, however, rose from £5.16m to £9.1m.

The deficit excludes a prior year charge of £71,000 in respect of one of Allied's overseas hospital contracts and does not take any account of the £22,000 attributable loss in overseas hospital management fees. This revised fee, Allied

explains in the formal offer document, has been agreed in principle, but has not yet been formally approved.

The Allied board, headed by Sir Richard Mass, tells shareholders that the interim downturn arose from the losses in the food division, which continued to trade at a loss although at a much lower rate than that for the previous year.

Allied overseas hospital management profits were lower, but they do not yet reflect the benefits of the new £250m contract from the Saudi Arabian defence ministry. A dividend decision has been deferred until the total result for the year is known.

The Saudi contract is for a basic term of 34 years from end-December last, for which Allied will receive about £31m before allowing for related costs. This consultancy service includes higher inflation and interest rates, which could generate an evaporation of general consumer and business demand, thus producing a mild recession.

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However, as one broker noted last week: "I have this feeling deep down in my stomach that the economists are going to be wrong again."

Frank Vogl
in Washington

Power economies at Ford

Big increases in fuel costs expected in October have led Ford of Britain to announce the closure of a big part of the company-owned power station at its Dagenham manufacturing estate.

By October the plant will be taking all its electricity from the national grid and the power station's staff of 245 is to be reduced by 68. No enforced redundancies are envisaged and it is hoped that all workers affected can be redeployed.

Ford say that fuel cost rises leave it with no alternative if it is to provide the utilities at an economic cost to the manufacturing areas—but to import all electricity from the national grid.

A 1,000 press shop workers at Ford's Halewood plant enters its fourth week today. In lost production of more than 11,000 Escorts it has cost the company £28.25m.

There now seems a possibility, however, that the strike could be resolved this week.

Warshaw, Jan 29—Mr Kaufman, Minister of State for Industry yesterday discussed with Polish officials the chances for further collaboration in shipbuilding after the signing of a multimillion pound contract last week.

Under the £115m deal, Britain will build 24 cargo ships for Poland. Now Polish officials have suggested privately that further deals might be arranged.

Minister in Polish talks on further ship collaboration

for up to 12 bulk carriers is being investigated by British Shipbuilders. The deal is at very early stage and British Shipbuilders would only say yesterday that it was "following up an inquiry."

The ships, to be used for carrying iron ore, were discussed with the Venezuelan authorities by Dr. Dickson Mabon, the Minister for Energy, when he visited South America recently.

British Shipbuilders is also known to be hoping for a major batch of orders resulting from a proposal by Mexico to make a significant increase to its merchant fleet. The orders could be worth much more than the ships being built for Poland.

The most advanced of the major contracts being negotiated by British Shipbuilders is the £52m order of six cargo ships for India which will be financed from the British Government's overseas aid programme. Final agreement with the Indian Government is expected soon.

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Call for fuller reports by auditors

By Our Financial Staff
Supplementary statements to company accounts prepared in accordance with the Hyde guidelines should be reported on by auditors. This is the view of the Auditing Practices Committee of the Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies.

The committee advises that auditors "should carry out enough work to be able to report at least that the supplementary statement has been properly prepared in accordance with the methods set out in the notes to the accounts, to give the information set out in the Hyde guidelines."

The consultative committee also suggests that the scope of the Estate Agents Bill is too wide. The accountants want it made clear that when a professional adviser incidentally touches a prospective vendor in touch with a buyer, and then takes no further part in the transaction, his role would not fall within the proposals.

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pending plans criticism

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versity, although the ority of papers, some writ- by distinguished economists, thought either to express bits about the adequacy of government investment, which at calculated to be almost 24 per cent lower in real terms in 1981-82 than in 1973-74.

However, the contradictory nature of many of the criticisms contained in these academic papers may leave the subcommittee more hindered than helped when cross-questioning the Treasury witnesses, who will be able to use this conflict of analysis as a convenient smoke-screen to avoid answering directly the more difficult questions.

These witnesses will include Mr John Aspin, deputy secretary at the Treasury, responsible for general expenditure policy; Miss Patricia Brown and Mr Frank Cassell, Under Secretaries responsible, respectively, for expenditure analysis and policy analysis; and possibly Mr Robert Butler, Under Secretary concerned with expenditure policy.

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How a state counselling service has aided business and saved jobs

A helping hand for small firms

"If you think you've got problems, try your friendly government department for help" is hardly the sort of invitation you would expect to elicit much enthusiastic response from hard-pressed small firms. Yet in the South-west businesses are taking up the invitation at the rate of 80 to 90 a month to seek advice from the Small Firms Counselling Service.

The scheme, which is being promoted by the Department of Industry, was launched on a pilot basis, centred on Bristol, during November 1976. Now, officially deemed a success, it is going national.

Two months ago, the service was extended to the northern region and a third branch, in the North-west, is due to start operating on February 15. By the end of the year, it is planned that all eight regions of England should be covered, with counselling in Scotland and Wales to follow probably some time during 1979.

Although there is a degree of overlap, the purpose—unlike that of the government's Small Firms Information Centres which only provide a signpost service—is to offer the small man practical guidance with his problems, if necessary over a period of several months or longer. Up to 10 days' counselling can be requested a year with the first session being free, the second costing £5 and thereafter charges are £15 a day.

Great stress is laid on the fact that the counsellors are experienced businessmen in their own right—and not civil servants. The average age of the South-west team is 54 and, while the majority are retired or semi-retired, some like Mr Ashby Tabb, whose company was recently taken over, are still in their forties. Despite the modest remuneration—a

£200 retainer, (at the rate of £12 a day)—recruitment is almost a case of *embarras de riches*.

Mr David Gwinell, who heads the Small Firms Division, says there were over 400 applications for the 24 appointments (subsequently reduced to 18) made in the South-west, with a similar choice and calibre of candidates in the North. For some the attraction is an occupation offering variety to fill their spare time. For others, like Mr Roy Filling, who operates from Bourne-mouth at one of the six local offices attached to Bristol, a major motivation is a fellow feeling of having shared the same problems.

queries and general management. Some impressive successes are being claimed. On the jobs front alone, Mr Brown boasts that counselling is contributing in three ways. With 24 per cent of inquiries revolving around starting a business and a further 10 per cent around plans for expansion, he is taking some credit for job creation—or, as he puts it, "jobs in prospect".

Equally, he says, "We had a number of firms on the brink of insolvency which, thanks to the counselling they received, are still soldiering on." At a rough estimate, he puts the total gain to the

specialists so you are inclined to miss things. This service—they can put you right."

Another satisfied customer is Mrs Helen Blidenburg (Bournemouth), a partner in an aircraft consultancy engineering firm that was trying to raise £250,000 for expansion. "We were getting nowhere on our own," she said, "but now, thanks to the service, we have obtained the whole loan on very satisfactory terms."

"They gave us guided help from start to finish, from the presentation of our case right through to the final technicalities."

Other client feedback includes reports of improved credit control, the doubling of output on a machine, help with locating specialist contacts—and praise for the business group and sympathetic tact of counsellors.

What about complaints and disappointments? After all, even a government organisation is sufficiently commercial to refer journalists only to the "growing testimonials" department. If small firms are disappointed, they are not complaining, Mr Brown says that out of the odd 700 assignments that have been handled in the region there have been only three letters expressing dissatisfaction against their satisfaction.

Even cost is fairly modest. The estimated expenditure of the region for the year 1979-80, when all eight English regions will be operational, is £370,000.

Assuming that the scheme is only half as good as it is made out to be, two facts are made clear. One is that business advice is best left to businessmen and not to civil servants. The second is that, given the encouragement, small firms can and will produce jobs.

Helping them to overcome problems is a useful and welcome exercise. Now, how about a climate for incentive?

Rosemary Brown

The purpose is to offer the small man practical guidance with his problems, if necessary over a period of several months or longer

"I know what people go through when running a small business," he said. He sold his own company nearly two years ago when he moved to the coast.

"Small" broadly follows the Bolton definition, which means that companies with up to 200 employees are eligible to use the service. However, according to Mr Mike Brown, manager of the South-west operation, more than 90 per cent of client firms employ 20 or fewer people.

Predictably, the largest number of inquiries concern finance—with problems ranging from cash flow and credit control to provision of cash for expansion. The next largest category is people waiting to start a business for the first time, followed by marketing

region over the past year at about 200 jobs.

There is also quite a fund of "bumpy remedy" stories. One company that was dilatory over its debtors was helped to institute a new system and by the end of five weeks had regained £10,000.

Mr Dennis Wood (Plymouth), who runs a wholesale motor spares business and was in trouble with the bank, was advised that he was both carrying too much stock and had failed to raise prices in line with inflation. Now he reports happily that during the first three quarters of this year he has increased turnover by £7,000, compared with the whole of the previous year.

"It's a great service," he said. "When you're small like me, you can't afford to employ

Four key debates to form core of BIM convention

Many of the perennial concerns of managers are likely to receive a vigorous presentation at the second national convention of the British Institute of Management to be held at Wembley Conference Centre on March 7.

Nearly 20 motions have been listed to form the basis for four major debates on composite resolutions. These four debates fall under the headings of:

Economic, social and political policies—the requirements of managers;
Management requirements of education and training;
Government and managers;
Managers and their representation.

Several of the motions are addressed to the need to evolve policies which will lead to an improvement in economic and industrial performance. Three

motions reflect the fashionable concern among managers about the adequacy of the educational and training systems to meet the industrial needs of the nation.

There will also be the more or less obligatory motions concerning the erosion of differentials and the burden created by the need to assimilate excessive amounts of legislation.

In 1976, the BIM at the behest of its members, took on the role

of representing managers in public debates and in seeking to influence the formulation of government policy.

A number of motions, however, suggest that the institute may not yet be fully meeting the demands of its members in this task. One motion refers to "the apparent lack of progress in executing . . . the representative role", and another to the failure to make a strong impact on public opinion.

Coming to terms with product liability

The acute concern being felt in both manufacturing industry and in the insurance business over the possibility of strict product liability being introduced in Britain was amply demonstrated recently when the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, having held a seminar on the subject in October, had to hold a second to cope with the demand.

This second seminar itself attracted a full house of over 260 people. Under strict product liability, manufacturers of defective products become liable for the payment of damages for personal injury, and possibly for damage to property, arising out of the use of the product.

This would greatly extend the manufacturers' or distributors' liability beyond the present position, under which an injured person can obtain redress only if he has a contractual relationship with the supplier and can establish, under the sale of goods legislation, that the product was "not of merchantable quality", or in tort if he can show that the defect is the result of the manufacturer's negligence.

Much of the present concern derives from the operation of product liability in the United States. The seminar was sprinkled with "horror" stories, suggesting that manufacturers

Injuries

and suppliers were being held liable for injuries in the most extraordinary circumstances, and that the cost of claims was high level at which awards were pitched.

The impact of this could be seen in a statement by Michael Payne, joint chairman of Lloyd's Law Reform Committee, that depending on the type of product, the insurance rate applicable for United States product liability cover for a British based firm can be anything up to 20 to 25 times the level of product liability insurance rates in Britain.

Although the average level of product liability insurance rates in Britain is less than £1 per £1,000 of turnover, Mr Payne warned that if strict liability were introduced in Britain, this would be bound to be increased.

There seems to be little doubt that some form of more or less strict product liability will be introduced in Britain. Already the Law Commission has put forward recommendations, the Council of Europe has prepared a convention, and the European Commission has submitted a draft directive on the subject to the Council of Ministers.

Finally, the Royal Commission under Lord Pearson, which has been considering the question of compensation for personal injuries, is expected to report shortly and this will almost certainly have an important influence on the question of product liability.

The Department of Trade is in the process of consulting about 300 representative bodies on the recommendations of the Law Commission, and this is likely to lead to the publication of a discussion document, although it could be a year or more before it appears.

While no government decisions have been taken on the question of strict liability, it is clear that there is much support for the principle of strengthening the consumers' rights of redress for damage suffered through the use of defective products.

Equally, there appears to be an awareness that new products are by their nature likely to give rise to more

Innovations

claims than are old and proven products, and that there is therefore a risk that unduly onerous provisions for product liability would run the risk of impeding innovation and technical advance.

Among the possible ways of limiting the impact of product liability would be by placing a ceiling on compensation, limiting liability to claims arising from injury and not from economic loss, and providing various defences, including the use of warning notices, as constituting at least mitigating circumstances.

One of the consequences of the development of strict liability in the United States and elsewhere is that insurance companies are looking much more closely at the risks they are incurring in this area.

What this means for the industrialist was outlined at the seminar by Glen W. Hunsman of Phoenix Assurance. The first requirement was that manufacturers should accept that the product liability risk existed and should not allow confidence in their product to lead them to suppose that they would always be immune from claims.

They should evaluate all the design, production and marketing processes in order to minimise the risk as far as possible. They should keep up-to-date and accessible records which would include information on sub-contracted work, sources of materials and so on, and should have a detailed product safety programme.

Finally, they should have a written programme which would enable them to recall at short notice, if necessary, all products of a particular type if it became apparent that they were defective.

RC

Value of opencast mining to the nation's economy

From the Chairman of the Opencast Executive National Coal Board

Sir, Opencast coal output—for which Mr Gascoyne alleged (January 25) there was no need—does in fact make a very significant contribution to Britain's energy supplies and to the nation's economy.

Last year's output of 11.25 million tons of opencast coal helped the balance of payments by saving the nation importing £370m worth of oil. It also ensures supplies of special qualities of coal—providing, for example, two-thirds of total anthracite output. A mixture of opencast and deep-mined coal is often essential to meet customers' needs—providing the right coal mix for selected power stations and for making high grade coke.

The profit from opencast mining last year helped the coal industry meet its financial targets—for the third year running. Our operations also assist employment by providing thousands of jobs on opencast sites, mainly in areas of high unemployment, and in the engineering works which provide the equipment.

Mr Gascoyne grossly exaggerates the operations of opencast mining when he writes about the "devastation" caused by the "ruthless and indiscriminate action of bulldozers". The reality is that plans are initially agreed with the local authorities and are carefully controlled to avoid opencast working becoming a public nuisance; operations are also regularly reviewed by

local committees jointly, involving the NCB, the contractors and residents. Since 1942 more than 120,000 acres of land have been restored for agriculture and forestry, and derelict areas have been transformed into countryside parks and golf courses. Restoration work has resulted in environmental awards for several new-land-from-old projects after opencast mining.

The nation needs more coal from deep mines and they have the capacity and potential to provide it. The incentive scheme for miners, now agreed for every coalfield, has already improved results and will unleash that potential.

The nation's need for opencast output will remain and we are building up to the target figure agreed by the Government of 15 million tons a year by the mid-1980s.

The National Coal Board Opencast Executive are willingly committed to do everything practically possible to combat problems for local people while an opencast site is operating. It should also be remembered that, unlike most other industrial activities, opencasting has a strictly limited life—after the coal has been extracted the site is then returned, fully restored, to the community.

I am, Sir, very truly, DONALD DAVIES, Chairman, Opencast Executive, National Coal Board, Hobart House, Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7AE, January 27.

Yours faithfully, JOHN GOODLAND, Down House, Pyleigh, Taunton, Somerset TA4 3RA.

Assessments of the supply and demand for oil

From Professor Peter Odell

Sir, I am sorry Mr K. R. Williams (January 16) feels that I misrepresented him. In his Royal Institution Nuclear Power Forum paper—from which this correspondence originates—he wrote: "Most experts are agreed that the world oil resource is of the order of 2 x 10¹² barrels. He went on to conclude 'unless one adopts zero growth in the use of oil . . . output will reach a maximum between 1990 and 2000, after which production will decline'."

As the context in which he writes indicates clearly that Mr Williams does not expect the demand for oil to turn down because alternative energies become available, his conclusion that a decline curve will begin in the 1990s must be because he agrees that oil will be running out.

From Mr Alan G. Thompson

Sir, Eight years intensive experience of installing profit sharing based on sharing added value in a wide variety of industries, reinforces Mr Copeman's argument (January 25) that growth and investment is thereby stimulated. Analysis of results achieved, however, indicates participation and community—too, translated into practical programmes of action, are essential ingredients. Success is readily measured as improvements in pay,

productivity and profit and less quantitatively, as better human relationships and satisfactions.

The explanation of the principles involved in sharing added value to the majority of employees is a difficult task, and has necessitated a special study of how to present the ideas and the trading results simply. The use and productivity of capital, though highly relevant, is something general to be introduced gradually, after an understanding has been reached as to how the

This, indeed, is the Shell view which has been propagated on many occasions. On one such occasion in 1975 (at an ILLAS energy resources seminar) there was a discussion of this Shell view with its representative at that meeting. Mr R. Slick of the company's Exploration and Production Division, finally indicated that the view was based on an evaluation of the oil that would be available to companies such as Shell in the context of the oil industry's view on the economic and political policies of world resource development over the rest of the century.

This is entirely reasonable, as a Shell view of the world, for the likes of Shell—or rather of the limited part of the world in which the international oil companies will be able to operate in the future. But it is not an objective statement of world oil potential. Indeed, it

is debatable whether it is more or less objective. A recent opinion of Academic M.A. Strykowski, Secretary of the Division of Energetics of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, that the Soviet scientists' estimate of world oil resources amounts to about 9 x 10¹² barrels is a "cautious" one. "Natural Resources Forum", 1, no 3, April 1977, p. 5. However, perhaps a spokesman would care to mention why his company's view differs so much from those of their Soviet scientific colleagues.

Yours faithfully, PETER ODELL, Visiting Professor, Department of Geography, The London School of Economics and Political Science, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE, January 19.

Participation and communication in the workplace

Foundations for the largest factory to be built in Britain for the past 20 years, have yet to be laid but already the expectation of good times has begun to transform the economic tempo of Bridgend.

Ford is building a 180m factory on a 170-acre site which now resembles a sticky landscape as heavy equipment removes some of the half million cubic metres of earth that must be shifted before the first concrete is poured.

When that is done, 3,300 tonnes of steel will be erected to cover one million square feet, machinery will be installed, roads laid and then 2,500 men and their families will be ready to produce one of Ford's new cars—codenamed Eric—in 1980.

The scale of the operation is impressive by any standard, and initial work has been passed the diversion of the river Ewenny which occasionally flooded the site. One reason why the Welsh Development Agency and the Welsh Office were able to sell the site is the imminent completion of the M4 across South Wales.

British Rail is also hoping to capitalise on the factory and has submitted proposals to Ford for the building of a 1.5-mile-long siding to link the factory to the main railway network for the delivery and transportation of raw materials and finished products.

Ford expects that most of the workforce will be recruited locally and has calculated that

productivity of labour machines, materials and men can be increased. Capital productivity, however, is readied by the use of a "score card" and a "score-board" displays. Graphs or grids often confuse employees and make the feel that results are being manipulated.

Yours faithfully, ALAN THOMPSON, Alan G. Thompson & Associates Limited, 14 Dover Street, London W1X 3PH, January 26.

Unions and management calculate that this could eventually affect 1,200 jobs and an application by them to move Bridgend would obviously receive a high priority.

One danger, facing Ford that initially it will not have sufficient pool of skills labour to man the highly automated lines. To avert this, it is training locally-recruited young men in its Swansea apprentice school in electrical and mechanical engineering, and hydraulics.

The town of Bridgend is confident that the factory and its estimated 800 spin-off jobs will create, will enable it to increase its stature as an industrial centre for the area.

Groups like Revlon International, Sony and the Avon Rubber Company, have already invested in the town while a nearby Maesteg 14 Italian porcelain experts have been reaching Wales to leave a legacy of produce and market Capri di Monte Figurines.

The firmest indication of people's expectations is the rapid movement in the housing market with first-time buyers bringing their plans forward before house prices escalate out of reach. Construction generally has benefited and it is estimated that at peak 2,000 workers will be needed on the site.

The full impact of the factory is difficult to assess at this stage, but Bridgend is already grateful for the day that Detroit decided to move there.

Tim Jones

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DECEMBER 1977

BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

The market shows its doubts

The equity market was already nervous about the state of institutional liquidity before Midland Bank's £56m rights issue last week, and with another £320m gilt 10 on the partly-paid Treasury 101 per cent 19 due next Monday, plus fears of more equity issues, the technical problems for the market are likely to remain in the forefront of investors' minds in the short-term.

But even if institutions were more liquid, it is doubtful whether they would be amending themselves to equities just now. The market's lack of confidence is how signals it has failed to take a step from the downward pressure on short-term interest rates in recent weeks. Gilt, have largely ignored money market developments. Not long ago a signal by the Bank of England that it wanted rates to stay when the market was pushing them down would merely have been taken as an indication that the pressure would be on again following week. But gilts were showing such optimism last Friday.

The continuing worry for equities is that, de from the odd bright spot like John Smith, it is still not clear that the downward of profit forecasts has gone far enough. Moreover, now that the Government is having some success with its policy, there are even questions being asked about whether, without substantial intervention from Mr. Healey, the great con-led boom will happen after all.

ice Commission

Early indications
for investors

Initial reports from the new Price Commission may have the effect of disguising wider implications of its new role. The opened brief, with which the Commission started operations last August has so far surfaced in the form of guarded comments on corporate strategy that may not have been fully absorbed by investors in the light of the generally favourable trend decisions so far on price increases.

But these comments are precisely what it provides the key to the Commission's tactics which are explicitly aimed at defining standards of efficiency and playing them against the levers of price controls and adverse publicity. It is the kind of investigation of a sector or a company by the new Price Commission that would prove critical.

The effect on share prices in sectors which come under the Commission's microscope may well be more far-reaching than is being appreciated at this point. Here, breweries provide the obvious case study. The old Price Commission ended 5 days with an extremely adverse report



Charles Williams, chairman of the Price Commission.

the sector and an effective six-month price freeze followed, accompanied by use of a longer statutory freeze. Now a new Commission has launched an investigation of Allied Breweries. True, during the past 12 months the brewery has outperformed the market by 10 per cent on hopes of a stable increase in possible incomes this year, but by the token, this factor has led to store are outperforming the average by 30 per cent or more. Moreover, this was a period when stores were announcing profits more or less in line with expectations while breweries were beating estimates.

So there is little doubt that intervention

fears have been the dominant factor in investment thinking about brewers which have offset an underlying bullish tone in the sector.

This may be inevitable in a sector that can so easily be turned into a political football but it is inherent in the new Commission structure that this effect will be spread elsewhere as it becomes more entrenched and confident in its role. Though sector investigations have to be specifically referred from above (effectively from the Minister), the Commission can pounce on companies at any time.

The scope of its company investigations so far suggests the 2,000 pages of information often collated in each instance are boiled down to a report of some 20 pages for public consumption.

Additionally, there is a growing suspicion that the new Commission can probe almost anything on the slightest provocation and this is likely to lead to price increases and lead to pressure on profit margins. It follows a general widening of margins when inflation accounting was admitted to the price formula and immediately before the new Commission started work but it now comes at a time when export margins are suffering from the rise in the pound.

So for the moment at least shareholders will have to learn to live with the likelihood that more sectors will be influenced by intervention possibilities. The experience of the breweries demonstrates how this can affect market sentiment.

U.S. interest rates

Rising demand
for funds

Interest rates in the United States are set to rise gradually this year and some "crowding-out" may take place for private borrowers as the Federal Government increases its demands. The outlook for both bonds and equities in the United States thus remains far from bright, and there is mounting anxiety on Wall Street over the sort of policies the Federal Reserve Board will pursue under its new chairman, Mr. William Miller.

It clearly faces considerable problems. Pressure will be on from the Treasury to move to an easier monetary posture to accommodate the financing of the Government's needs without allowing too much of a rise in interest rates.

The Treasury itself is likely to be in the markets for at least \$60,000m this year, as against around \$44,000m last year. But with banks showing signs of less keenness to add to their stocks of such securities, with state and local governments also lowering their Federal securities purchases and with the level of foreign buying uncertain, the Treasury's task this year could be harder. Treasury bill rates will almost certainly rise, as will rates on other government issues.

Business investment is seen as rising at roughly the 7 per cent real level seen last year, but with corporate liquidity levels being run down there is a prospect of stronger business loan demand. Companies are likely to continue concentrating their borrowing activities of the commercial paper and short-term loan markets and the New York and Chicago banks, which failed to participate fully in the strong general rise in business bank borrowing in the United States last year, may come more into the picture in 1978.

The housing market remains strong and demand for mortgage funds is likely to continue at an exceptionally high level. Demand for new cars remains buoyant as well and credit demand here is also likely to be high once again. All in all, therefore, there seems a strong prospect of greater money and capital market pressures this year than were seen in 1977.

Total demand for funds could easily rise by \$15,000m to around \$345,000m, and few experts on Wall Street would argue with predictions of a Federal funds rate of about 8 per cent by year's end, a prime rate of about 9 per cent and roughly a 9 per cent rate on top triple "A" bonds.

Earlier this month it was announced that British Leyland had negotiated short-term credit facilities from commercial banks of up to £50m, to meet its cash flow requirements.

This followed some critical questioning of the £50m in September last year, when £50m was made available to the company for day-to-day purposes by the National Enterprise Board from £100m of public money that had been proposed only for the purpose of investment. On this occasion, for whatever reason, the company, the NEB and the Government decided that the money should be provided in a different way.

This raises the general question of whether security the banks have, or think they have, in making such loans. All concerned are insisting that they are not commercial loans, on normal commercial terms. But, except in the narrowest sense, that claim is absurd.

For no bank regarding British Leyland as an ordinary commercial concern, could in banking prudence make any such loan. Other factors must, therefore, be taken into account.

The other factors taken together meant that the bankers concerned

Hugh Stephenson

Comfort for the heavy laden

collectively and individually came to the conclusion that the Government would never allow the NEB to allow British Leyland to default on those loans.

The somewhat unusual procedure whereby this "normal" commercial facility was announced by a Secretary of State, Mr. Varley, to the House of Commons may have been an important symbolic part of this conclusion.

In practice, there is no reason to suppose that the trust of the banks is in any sense misplaced. For the Government is so committed to the NEB's inherited rescue cases, like British Leyland and Rolls-Royce, that their debts are effectively gilt-edged.

There could be two reasons why the Government and the NEB are anxious to go through the business of managing successfully to convey the impression to those that matter that such dealings are in practice safe, while carefully giving no such formal guarantee.

The first is that a formal guarantee of British Leyland borrowing would be a contingent liability so far as the NEB and the Government were concerned, which would have to be accounted for to Parliament. The most

recent notorious case of this sort emerged from the Fay report on the Crown Agents.

This revealed that the Crown Agents on a massive scale had written "comfort letters" to potential lenders to its associates and subsidiaries. These, while not being normal guarantees, assured banks and others that the Crown Agents would be responsible for seeing that loans were repaid on time, with any accrued interest.

Such a formulation, in practice clearly a guarantee, and should be accounted as such. The NEB has not given any such undertaking and would obviously be very unwise to do so.

It is said, however, that the NEB "acknowledges and consents" to the loan facilities being made available to British Leyland this month. Lenders have also had their attention drawn to all past statements of Government support for British Leyland. The intention, clearly, short of guarantees and comfort letters, is that they should be comforted.

The second reason for not giving formal guarantees in the British Leyland case is, presumably, that lenders would be minded to ask for them in

relation to all other borrowing by NEB subsidiaries.

Since the NEB is being put forward as a vehicle to be thought of as being like any other industrial holding company, the purpose is spoiled if borrowing by its subsidiaries can only be done under formal guarantees.

It is, however, very unclear how far the Government can escape moral and financial responsibility for companies, even when they are only controlled through a minority NEB holding.

Once a company has got into such financial difficulties that it can only continue to trade on the basis of support and comfort from the Government or the NEB and it is decided in the national interest that this course should be followed, it is difficult to see any government getting away with the proposition that all unsecured creditors can sink or swim by themselves.

If the precedent of the Rolls-Royce is anything to go by, where a previous government first gave support and then allowed in a receiver, political factors always come into play in the end. In the Rolls-Royce case they were so powerful that the creditors, of course, got paid in full and even the shareholders eventually got 55p.

Patricia Tisdall on the flush of
interest in overseas travel

A whiff of fresh air for the holiday trade

Charter holidaymakers leaving
Gatwick airport for Majorca

All the signs are that the British travel trade is heading for a recovery. Demand for overseas package holidays, traditionally the earliest indicator to the market in general, has seldom been more buoyant.

The trouble is that the industry, debilitated by the lean years, is unlikely to be able to gear capacity to take full advantage if the dramatic about-turn in its fortunes fulfils its early promise.

In sharp contrast to their experiences this time last year, the big tour operators are reporting that advance bookings are coming in thick and fast.

British Airways, whose Sovereign and Enterprise inclusive tour programmes are among the largest in the field, said last week that it had already sold more Enterprise summer holidays than it did for the whole of last year. Advance sales of the more expensive "scheduled" service Sovereign holidays are nearly 50 per cent up on January, 1976.

The improvement started early last autumn, continued through Christmas and has been maintained ever since. Unfortunately for the charter operators, the signs of upturn did not come early enough to influence the negotiations for aircraft seats.

The result has been that tour operators' capacity is now lower than it was at this time last year. At 3,480,000 compared with 3,570,000 on January 1 last year, the Civil Aviation Authority has 3 per cent fewer inclusive air holiday charters on its books than a year ago.

There will undoubtedly be some increase in authorisations requested from the CAA in the April round of renewals of tour operators' licences. But it is unlikely that this will do more than bring levels up to those of last year.

If bookings continue at the present high level, most tours will be sold out by Easter. It is easy enough to understand why the tour operators were wary about backing early hints of improvement when they were clinching their deals with the airlines. The negotiations took place last summer, following six months of near-disaster.

Late and sparse bookings, together with the abolition of restrictions on discounting, had sparked off an early price war, led by British Airways, between the big operators.

This was followed by a wave of cancellations and consolidation of tour operators. Many of the smaller, which were already struggling to near vanishing point were further threatened by high inflation rates and un-

certainly about currency exchange levels and oil costs.

On the past record, the notoriously volatile travel trade could be expected to pull out some extra aircraft space even at this late stage. But circumstances in aviation charter have radically changed since the heady days of the early 1970s.

The four years of decline since the 1973 package holiday peak when nearly five million inclusive holidays were sold has had its effect on the airlines. For many, it has meant that aircraft have simply not been replaced. Other airlines, including British Caledonian and Laker, have turned to more financially satisfactory markets.

British Caledonian, which at the start of the decade was a major force in the charter field, is switching to scheduled operation. Laker is marketing its own inclusive holiday package and its new investment has gone on setting up its transatlantic services.

Other types of travel have suffered much less than holiday and student business. The development of advance booking charters on North American and other long-haul routes has helped travel for the purpose of visiting friends and relatives.

Business travel for conferences as well as by individuals has also increased. Both these types of travel, although smaller, are more valuable to the airlines than the much larger but seasonal holiday traffic.

There is little likelihood of the British air charter companies' being reinforced by foreign aircraft. A recent government regulation prevents foreign aircraft other than those operated out of the destination country being leased by British carriers. Air charter companies in Spain and other eligible countries have switched their marketing emphasis, after very poor returns from Britain last year, to Germany and Scandinavia.

Mr. John Skinner, managing director of Viking International Travel Holdings, who as a charter broker sits between the tour operators and the airlines, estimates that at least 350,000 seats have irrevocably vanished from this summer's market. His view is that a position where there was probably too much charter capacity has moved to one of scarcity.

A severe shortage, if it materialises (and it is a measure of how far the tour operators' confidence has been knocked that they are even

now placing no bets on this), will work to the airlines' disadvantage rather than to the operators'. For some of the prices for seats negotiated in last year's gloomy business climate have been fixed at little more than break-even point.

Clearly the prices soon to be calculated by the airlines for 1979 will be much harder, but there is little they can do about the present boom.

The tour operators' on the other hand stand to make some big gains. Their prices are based on loadings, typically of 85 or 90 per cent. Any extra business is pure gain. A shortage of capacity will mean that late prospective holidaymakers

If bookings
continue
at the present
high level
most tours will
be sold
out by Easter

will have to take what tours they can get and the operators can fill up more empty seats.

Very satisfactorily, from the operators' viewpoint is that the trend so far has been for the cheaper holidays to sell fastest. If it continues this means that later customers will be offered longer haul and dearer tours where traditionally the booking pattern is closer to departure dates.

Significantly, British Airways report that already their inclusive tours to America, Barbados and even Kenya are selling ahead of target.

Less apparent but the spurt in late holiday bookings caught the package tour companies by surprise. The cross-channel ferry operators picked up a lot of extra business. A similar situation is likely to occur this year.

The ferry operators are much better equipped to cope with additional car and passenger traffic. For, unlike the air charterers, they gained the full benefit of the boom in 1976 and 1977 with incoming foreign visitors.

Additional routes and capacity were planned early enough as a result to come into operation in time to make full advantage of this year's expected growth in traffic going in the outward direction.

P & O Normandy Ferries, for example, through the addition of an additional ship are able to double the number of sailings on the popular Dover to Boulogne route.

But other operators including Sealink which has just announced plans to order another two ships and the French owned Brittany Ferry company have also stepped up their services.

Large growth this year is confidently expected not just on the continental crossings but also to Ireland where tourist trade from Britain had languished until last year.

The tour operators have not been unaware of the greatly increased flexibility of surface travel holidays. A number, including Cosmos while not attempting to raise their capacity for air holidays, have stepped up their coach holiday programmes. Coaches containing say 60 or so holidaymakers can be adjusted much more easily to take account of market changes than aircraft seating several hundreds.

Standing to lose most from an inclusive tour shortage are Britain's 4,000 or so retail travel agents. Despite attempts to diversify into, for example, the sale of British-based holidays, the travel agents still rely on inclusive air holidays for the bulk of their remuneration which is based on a percentage of sales.

Due to extra sales efforts by the ferry operators, travel agents will pick up some of the expected extra business from independent holidaymakers, but it is traditional for this to be booked direct with the carrier.

On top of a gloomy business outlook, travel agents are also threatened with radical changes arising from the removal of trade restrictions on discounting and the likely abolition of a "closed holiday agreement" which prevents tour operators from selling through unauthorised outlets.

A measure of the travel retailers' insecurity is their violent objection to Tjersborg, the Danish tour operator, which has made a spirited entry to the British overseas holiday market this year.

Tjersborg tactics have been to cut holiday prices through bypassing travel agents and passing on the commission direct to its customers. The move has been successful to have sold out its holiday allocation by February, but it has stirred up an unprecedented scale of reaction from the retail agents.

Business Diary in Europe: After Schleyer

West German employers' association (BDA) and the Federation of Industry (BDI) have finally found candidates in the vacancies caused by the resignation of Hans-Joachim Schleyer.

The BDA has just nominated its vice-president Otto Esser to succeed Schleyer while the BDI will today nominate Dr. Olaus Fasolt, a Bonn industrialist, to be Germany's "Mr. Industry".

As soon as it became clear there was no suitable candidate to take over the role, the 60-year-old Fasolt became the automatic runner at the BDI. Filling BDI slot proved more difficult and Dr. Fasolt's name only came to be actively traded on gossip exchange a week or so ago. Unlike his two predecessors, who both came from industrial concerns, Dr. Fasolt, 56, is a representative of Germany's small to medium-sized industry. He is the boss of the Westel works in Bonn, manufacturer of building pliers.

He will come to his new post with a wealth of experience. He has been active in the man and European ceramic industry organisations, is chairman of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Bonn and also English, French, Italian and Swedish.

Christopher Tagendat, a Luxembourgish commissioner at the European Community in Brussels, is causing a flutter over in the corridors of the Foreign Ministry. German officials are saying as far as possible about a letter to Tagendat to the Foreign

Minister, Arnaldo Forlani, about a possible fraud over butter imports.

One report says it all started when a lorry loaded with butter from Rotterdam overturned on a motorway near Turin in 1975. The driver fled and the import documents turned out to be forged.

In this way, during 1974 and 1975 it is suggested, over 6,000 tons of butter were imported, ostensibly from eastern Europe via Rotterdam, bearing forged documentation of the Italian customs at Como.

Could this have been butter which really originated from inside the Community, instead of coming from eastern Europe? If so, did it evade the Common Market agricultural levy, amounting to £5m?

Could it also have benefited from the subsidised low price at which the Community was selling to the Soviet Union, to reduce its own "butter mountain"? These are all questions which Brussels is trying to have properly investigated.

The Italian authorities, however, are said to have refused to participate in the investigations, giving rise to speculation that there is a cover-up for somebody important.

Tagendat's letter is reported to warn Forlani that if he does not reply by the first week of February, Italy could be before the Community's Court of Justice in Luxembourg.



Benedek Federspiel.

strikingly attractive lawyer with the Danish Consumer Council.

She was on her way to a council meeting of the European union of consumer organisations, BEUC, who were sending a delegation to Dalsager next day, in his capacity as president of the agriculture council.

Chivalrously Dalsager said how much he looked forward to being lobbied by the lovely and lively Mrs Federspiel, but she, in fact, was intending to be back in Denmark before the delegation's appointment.

No matter. The hint was quickly taken, the date for the audience advanced and BEUC won a noticeably sympathetic hearing for their arguments against increases in support prices for products already in structural surplus, and in favour of using the surpluses to benefit EEC consumers.

The bodyguard business is booming in France since last week's kidnapping of the millionaire Belgian industrialist, Baron Edouard-Jean Empain. Until recently it has only been a few nervous types who wanted their own personal "gorilla" to look after them, but in recent months all that has changed.

apparently all set to rap the United Kingdom over the knuckles for yet another infringement of its treaty obligations.

A decision had been expected giving Britain two months to enforce EEC rules regarding the installation of tachographs—the dreaded "spy in the cab"—in most categories of commercial vehicles. In the event, this was postponed until next month.

The tachograph, a device for recording speed, time and distance travelled and rest periods, is strongly disliked by drivers' trade unions in Britain, mainly because it would reduce overtime earnings. The commission says that it would encourage safer driving by outlawing "cowboy" drivers.

With the temporary job subsidies under attack, memories of the Scotch whisky affair still fresh and heavy pressure being put on the British to make concessions in the fisheries negotiations, Francois-Xavier Ortoli, the senior French commissioner, argued persuasively that this was not the time to unleash another bolt across the Channel.

The bodyguard business is booming in France since last week's kidnapping of the millionaire Belgian industrialist, Baron Edouard-Jean Empain. Until recently it has only been a few nervous types who wanted their own personal "gorilla" to look after them, but in recent months all that has changed.

The senior men in France of Fiat, Sme and Phonogram have all been reassigned in the past two years but it was really the kidnapping of the West German

employers' leader, Hans-Martin Schleyer, which brought home to the top men in France the message that they were vulnerable. Since last week agencies have had more requests than they can deal with.

The French employers' leader, Francois Ceyrac, for example, is said to have had a permanent official police team of three guarding him, but must have had to buy protection through an agency.

It is an expensive service to buy. The average fee is around 600 francs (£65) a year for each day of protection. The guards themselves receive about 350 to 400 francs a day. Most are unarmed—and it is up to the man being guarded to apply for a gun licence if he wants one. A high proportion of them are experts in unarmed combat, recruited out of sports clubs or from the relatively poorly paid police.

The idea of having a hefty companion travelling, eating and all but sleeping with one is particularly abhorrent to Frenchmen, but the fact that the Secret was whisked off so easily in broad daylight has made many ready to put up with this tough sort of no-gentleness.

Department of some comrades' being more equal than others... Aeroflot, the Soviet airline, is now offering first-class tickets on their internal flights. For example, a single fare on the route between Moscow and the Black Sea city of Sochi is the equivalent of £27 up from £21 last year. For the extra money, first-class passengers are promised more leg room and better food.



Charter holidaymakers leaving
Gatwick airport for Majorca

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Capitalization and week's change

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